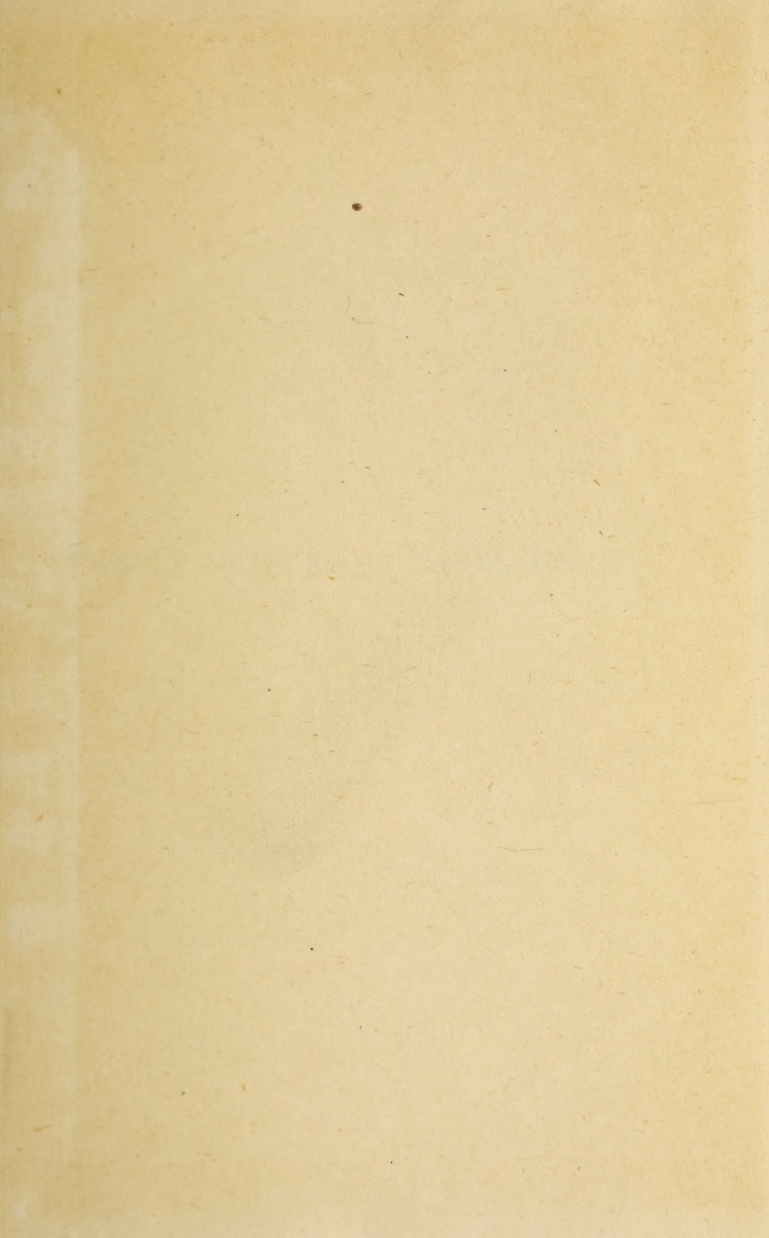



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THE PRINCIPLES
OF
CITIZENSHIP

SIR HENRY JONES





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THE PRINCIPLES OF CITIZENSHIP



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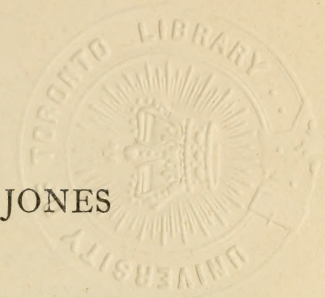
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TORONTO

THE PRINCIPLES OF CITIZENSHIP

BY
SIR HENRY JONES



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GLASGOW: PRINTED AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS
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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED
WITH MANY HAPPY MEMORIES AND GRATEFUL THOUGHTS
TO
THE ADOPTED AUNTS OF MY CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN
MY WIFE'S COMPANIONS IN GENTLE CITIZENSHIP
AND HER OLDEST FRIENDS
THE MISSES JAMESON OF MEDROX

TRUST in the power of thy behaviour for all thy influence on others. Thou canst preach thy gospel better by means of a good life than in any other way. Thou needest not to go far in search of the service of the best. Fill the station in which thou art placed. Let the honesty of thy work be plain to every one ; thy faithfulness to thy fellow-worker be steadfast ; thy zeal for the education of thy soul in thy hours of leisure be constant ; thy gentleness on thy hearth be like sunshine ; thy kindliness to thy neighbours like the fall of the dew ; thy jealousy for that which is just like fire ; thy love for good people like the river ; and thy loyalty to thy country like the sea.

PREFACE

IN the summer of 1918 the Y.M.C.A. was appointed by G.H.Q., France, to organize educational work on the lines of communication. At the suggestion of Sir Henry Hadow, its Director of Education, it invited me to write a book on the principles of Citizenship for use in the classes on Civics which were being established under the scheme.

Believing that there are few if any things better worth knowing, or the knowledge of which at the present time is more urgent, I have endeavoured to *introduce* the subject. That is to say, I have endeavoured to awaken and foster the spirit of honest, courageous and persevering enquiry in this domain, and to place the reader at a point of view from which enquiry is most likely to be fruitful. That point of view is, primarily, neither psychological nor economical, but ethical.

Ethics can be taught by one method only, namely, by a method analogous to that of the mathematician. The mathematical text-book is not so much a collection of doctrines to be learnt by rote, as a system of problems for the learner to solve and of suggestions as to the method of solution. Nor is this book a collection of ready-made moral conclusions. I have not tried to impart knowledge so much as to induce the reader to seek it. I could fain hope that there are not many things said in the book which

are not true, but the last thing I would desire is to dogmatise ; for the moral truths which have practical power in a man's life are those which he discovers anew for himself. Hence, I have not aimed at sparing the reader the toil of thinking : I want him to think.

I know no province where ignorance and thoughtlessness are more perilous, or where their opposites bring a greater reward, than that of the principles of citizenship. And looking to the future, not despairingly nor yet with unchastened confidence, I am forced to the conclusion that the citizenship of the great nations of the world is destined to be tried to the uttermost.

This country, by its political history, the greatest the world has known, and by the temperament of its people—their practical good sense, their pluck in grave difficulties, their good nature and, especially their spirit of fairplay—is fitted, as I may be pardoned for believing, above all other nations to try the experiment of Democracy, and to show the world the way to a very great and growing good. It will prosper in the degree in which it knows true citizenship ; and it will know the truth in the degree in which it seeks it.

Owing to the calls which have been made upon me in connection with the War, both my writing and my revision of the book have been hurried and incomplete. But I have had the invaluable and most generous help of Professor H. J. W. Hetherington ; and it is a privilege to express my gratitude to him.

HENRY JONES.

THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW,
September 1918.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A PLEA FOR THE USE OF THE METHODS OF SCIENCE IN MORAL MATTERS

LIKE numberless other persons, I have been driven back upon myself by the war. After more than thirty years of thinking and teaching and writing about right and wrong, freedom and necessity, duty and happiness, self-sacrifice and self-realization, the sublime order of the moral world, the permanence and stern benevolence of its laws, their embodiment in the multiform institutions of society and in the customs, traditions, and habits of its members, I am obliged to ask whether, after all, I have been of much use to my fellow-men. What is much more serious, I have been forced to enquire whether the Science I profess to teach has any use, and to question the whole value of theorizing on morals.

I have been proud of my office and very grateful for my "Station and its duties," and I believed I had sound reasons for my satisfaction. "Wise man," says Carlyle, "was he who counselled that Speculation should have free course, and look fearlessly towards all the thirty-two points of the compass, whithersoever and howsoever it listed."¹

¹ *Sartor Resartus*, book i. chap. i.

Such freedom has been mine : contemplation has been the business of my life. Another great writer, one of the greatest physicists of his age and one of the greatest philosophers of all time, taught me that there were two things supremely worthy of being contemplated. "Two things," he said, "fill the soul with ever new and ever deeper awe and reverence the more often and the more steadfastly they are reflected upon : the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me. I am not obliged to search for, or to guess at them, as if they were hidden in darkness, or were in some transcendental region beyond my ken : I see them before me, and I connect them directly with the consciousness of my own existence. The first begins from the place where I stand in the outer world of sense ; and my connection with it extends incalculably further than the eye can reach—to worlds beyond worlds and systems of systems, and to the boundless time of their periodic motion and of their beginning and duration. The second begins from my invisible self, my personality, and shows me placed in a world which has true infinitude, which is traceable only by the understanding, and with which (and through it also at the same time with all those visible worlds) I know I am connected not in a merely contingent way, as in the first case, but in a bond that is universal and necessary. The first view, that of the countless multitude of worlds, reduces my significance into nothingness, as if I were an animal form, which must give back the material out of which it has arisen to the planet (itself a mere point in the Universe) after it has for a short time (one knows not how) been endowed with life. The second, on the contrary, infinitely exalts my worth as an intelligence, through my personality, in which the moral law within reveals a life that is independent of all animality

and even of the whole world of sense, so far at least as not to be determined by it, but by a law that is not limited to the conditions and limits of this life but extends to the infinite."¹

Believing this, it seemed to me that he who contemplates the natural scheme, the man of science, is privileged far beyond the common lot of mankind. He is out on a voyage of discovery, in a universe whose meaning is inexhaustible, whose benevolence, so far as its laws are understood, is as deep as its meaning, and whose beauty is as gentle and bounteous as its laws are permanent. And with what an argosy of truths and practical utilities for mankind does he return, from time to time, to harbour !

The voyage of the moral philosopher is into a still more wondrous region. His opportunity and duty and privilege—which imply and pass into each other as the things of the spirit always do—seemed to me to be still greater. The Order he surveys extends beyond the stars. No horizon limits it ; space itself sleeps in its arms. And, somehow, each minutest fact within that Order is freighted full with the meaning of the whole. Its laws are so wide in their scope that they bind not man only, but all rational beings : the very divinity which he worships cannot break them and remain divine. And they are the laws of life, eternal and yet sustained in existence only as they are obeyed and willed anew. The process of this, the moral life is creative at every step ; a power that is greater than time is perpetually revealing itself in terms of time ; for the events that take place in time take their highest value and last meaning from their spiritual worth, which in its turn is not derived from what is temporal. Time itself with all its happenings is but a trickling stream flowing from a lake forever calm and

¹ Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason*.

full, but it bears within it the secret of its source. For every one of its events carries the past within it—it is an effect ; and it contains the future, for it is a cause. There is eternity in every ‘ Now.’

It is true that the immediate business of the moral philosopher concerns himself and his fellows. His universe is man. But man comes from afar, and has had a long pedigree in beast, and bird, and clod, and is the child of a Universe which we call ‘ material’ (knowing little what we mean). And he may be going far, as haply we might see could we but know him as he truly is. He is the richest of all beings in marvels,—complex, everchanging, never static—his life a growing mystery, a web which has the Infinite and Finite for warp and woof. Even the visible universe borrows worth from him, and in him attains its highest. For though his mind can invent neither order, nor beauty, nor any kind of good, yet it alone can find them ; and only in him, of all the finite beings we know, can they rise into existence. Borrowing the elemental forces of the physical world, in themselves silent and dark and without meaning, he lifts them into order and beauty : in his soul they break out into the marvel of light and colour and the miracle of music.

Here, then, in the study of man’s mind was a feast at which a thinking being might find content, and from which he might rise strengthened and go forth on a very great adventure. The moral philosopher’s chance of exploring and of serving his fellows stood unequalled. And he himself has had some guess of its magnitude ; the profession which he makes is unique in breadth and boldness. He tells us that he is dealing with the fundamental and ultimate conditions of well-being ; and no reflective man is disposed to disagree with him. If the world only saw him fill his station, or believed

that he is fit for his calling, it would sit at his feet and wait upon the words of his lips. But 'there's the rub'! Men compare his profession with his performance, and they contrast both with those of the man of science, and they are disappointed. If he does the same himself he is apt to find sounder reasons for bowing his head in shame and sorrow, and a stronger claim than any of his fellow-mortals to cry aloud for punishment, like Plato's repentant criminal, and to be put in the stocks for men to jeer at and pelt with proofs of his inefficiency.

There is no doubt as to what mankind wants. Men seek what is good, seek it only and always, and seek it by every art and method. Nay, the evolutionist and the metaphysician will tell us that all created being is out on the same errand. *καλῶς ἀπεφάνησαντο* What the world wants.
τὰγαθὸν οὐ παντ' ἐφίεται. (It has been well said that the good is that which all things seek.) In the last resort the Universe itself is intelligible only from the point of view of the Good. Men find no rest till they know what the world means. They do not feel that they understand the world when they know that it is and how it comes to be. These things they want to know, but they are not the end of human questionings. There is no ultimate satisfaction, no final at-one-ment with the world, till men have found its relation to their hopes and fears, desires and ideals; till they have found whether or not the world is good. Hence the 'Good' is the category that truly explains, the mount of vision on which both Philosophy and Religion take their stand, survey the world, and are satisfied. The ultimate meanings are the ultimate values. Lacking them, disappointed in his pursuit of the good, man lacks all things, and every gain is a loss. His wants, as he interprets them from day

to day, may be 'mad,' as Carlyle was too ready to say, and 'his endeavours mean'; but he is loveable all the same, perhaps all the more. For he is pitiful, and often deceives himself, desiring the good and, not knowing it, pursuing its opposite. Not that he is ever deluded or attracted by what he *sees* to be false. Sheer error, recognized as error, has no power over him. Error must put on the garb of truth if it is to have any influence. Nor is it otherwise as regards the good. There is no doubt that men do what is morally wrong, knowing that it is morally wrong; they choose the lesser rather than the greater good; nay, they often choose its opposite. For man is slow to see that the moral good is always better than any other kind of good. Even if he confesses this in general, is it certain that the lesser, merely natural or seeming good, say, the pleasure of the moment, does not at the moment of action seem to him to be the greater, and that evil does not appear to him as a good? That were to affirm, not that he is ignorant, but that he is mad; and his disease were, in truth, incurable. It is at least possible, and *prima facie* probable, that where the worse is chosen rather than the better, there has been some misleading influence at work either in the man himself, or in his circumstances or, more likely, in both. His judgment has erred. At any rate it is to his judgment that both men and consequences appeal. And when the light breaks upon him, he discovers that he has achieved what he did not desire, and never sought; for he desired what was good, and sought what would satisfy, and he has found a sham. Only in this way can his disappointment be explained, or his self-contempt. He has allowed himself to be deluded, or even deluded himself. He has "spent money for that which is not bread, and labour for that which satisfieth not."

How it comes that he deceives himself is a further enquiry. The facts suggest that it is through that half knowledge which we call ignorance. "He has chosen contrary to the nature of the truly eligible," says Plato, "and not of his own free will, but either through ignorance, or from some unhappy necessity" and is a being on his way to his goal. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" said the crucified teacher; and there may have been deep insight, as well as the utmost gentleness of love in the prayer. At the very lowest, when Jesus of Nazareth and the divine Plato say the same thing about that which they knew best, there is strong presumption that what they say cannot be lightly set aside. In the meantime we also may conclude that all men always desire *the* good, and in no sense false appearance. But they do not always know its nature, nor its features. They need the help of those who can dispel their ignorance and extricate them from their confusion, and there is no other need so sore or deep. "Show us the good" and the way to reach and to possess it, is the unceasing cry of humanity.

And this is precisely what the moral philosopher professes to do. His theme is The Good, and how to attain it. He professes to reveal its nature and tells us where it is to be found. He gives the marks by which men may recognize it. It is unconditioned, that is to say, it stands fast in its own worthiness, and is justified in and by and of itself. It is self-sufficient and even, in the last resort, all-inclusive—not only *summum* but *consummatum*. And lastly, it is to be found operative in what we call good character, and reveals itself there only. "It is impossible," said Immanuel Kant, "to conceive anything either in the world or out of it,

What the
moral
philosopher
offers.

which can be called good without any limitation, except a good will."

There are many other things, he acknowledges readily, 'which are good in many respects: a clear understanding, a keen wit, sound judgment, a happy disposition, decisiveness and steadfastness of purpose,—not to mention power and wealth and honour and good health and all those things which come under the name of good fortune. But, on the other hand, there is not one of these things which may not be in the highest degree evil and harmful (*äußerst böse und schädlich*).' It depends on the use to which they are put, and it is the will to good or evil which determines that use. In the will, whether it be good or bad, there lies a power of alchemy to which nothing can compare; and nowhere is there aught so important for man to know and possess, or rather to be as a will that wills the good. A still greater and wiser man than Kant was of the same opinion: one who, like the poet he quotes, 'sang not, cared not, about him who accomplishes all noble things, not having justice.' "For the goods of which the many speak are not really good: first in the catalogue is placed health, beauty next, wealth third; and then innumerable others, as for example to have a keen eye or a quick ear, and in general to have all the senses perfect; or, again, to be a tyrant and do as you like; and the final consummation is to have acquired all these things, and when you have acquired them to become at once immortal. But you and I say, that while to the just and holy all these things are the best of possessions, to the unjust they are all, including even health, the greatest of evils." ¹

The highest good brings all these things in its train—

¹ Plato's *Laws*, 661: Jowett's translation.

somewhere, to some one, some time ; and when you love others as well as yourself you will be willing to sow the seed, and leave the harvest to them. Achieve the highest and all else will follow. Give the natural scheme time and range, and it will prove that it is at the back of the good man's purpose—his means, and instrument, and helpmate, in fact. The moral order has the natural order in its service. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," says the greatest moral teacher the world has known, "and all these things shall be added unto you." The troubled history of man, to him who has eyes to see, reveals in page after page that at the core of wickedness there is putrescence. It is perishable stuff and disappointing. The nature of things, nay, its own nature, is ranged against it. But health is at the heart of well-doing, and it is the one perfect form of well-being. "And he said unto them, when I sent you without purse and scrip and shoes, lacked ye anything ? And they said, Nothing." ¹

Such, then, is the ware which the moral philosopher offers to the world. And he seeks no exclusive market ; he would have others sell, as well as himself, for there are some men whose stalls are fairer than his own. "These are the truths which, if I am not mistaken, you will persuade or compel your poets to utter with suitable accompaniments of harmony and rhythm, and in these they must train up your youth." ² And right royally have the poets done their part ; for they have laid bare the tragic pitilessness of the false good and the splendour of the benevolence of the true. Great poets and great philosophers are not 'moralists,' but they have been the world's greatest moral teachers.

¹ Luke xxii. 35.

² *Laws*, *ibid.*

The world doubts its value, and looks elsewhere.

And the world on the whole has been a willing listener to the poets, as to the men of science. But what of the philosophers? A great teacher of our own time answers,—“Poetry we feel, science we understand;—such will be the reflection, spoken or unspoken, of most cultivated men;—Theology professes to found itself on divine revelation, and has at all events a sphere of its own in the interpretation of sacred writings, which entitles it at least to respectful recognition; but this philosophy, which is neither poetry, nor science, nor theology, what is it but a confusion of all of these in which each of them is spoilt? Poetry has a truth of its own, and so has religion—a truth which we feel, though from the scientific point of view we may admit it to be an illusion. Philosophy is from the scientific point of view equally an illusion, and has no truth that we can feel. Better trust poetry and religion to the hold which, however illusive, they will always have on the human heart, than seek to explain and vindicate them, as against science, by help of a philosophy which is itself not only an illusion but a dull and pretentious one, with no interest for the imagination and no power over the heart.”¹

In order to determine whether this attitude of distrust is just, and what are the consequences of relying upon it, we should have to ask wider questions than
 What there is for the world to see. we can hope here to answer in a satisfactory way. But one thing is plain: poor as man still is and in want of many things, he has nevertheless done some profitable marketing somewhere. To change the metaphor, if we look back on his history we can see that he has travelled a long way, and that his path has, on the whole, led him to

¹ Green's *Prolegomena to Ethics*, pp. 2, 3.

better issues. It has been most tortuous, and he has followed it often stumbling, half blindly, driven by the stress of needs he does not comprehend, and inspired by hopes he could neither justify nor define. But he has come from a great distance. Homeless at first, and naked, hunger-haunted, and fear-driven, huddling in lake-dwellings, cowering in caverns; low-browed, crude, cruel, endowed to all seeming with nothing better than wild and wilful passions and a half-animal cunning, he has at length, and to no inconsiderable degree, found his soul. And there is no greater discovery; for it makes him at one stroke

“The heir of hopes too fair to turn out false.”

The submerged *man* in him having at last appeared

“Imprints

His presence on all lifeless things.”

And occasionally he has a very noble presence. At his best we found him “wear righteousness as a robe, and intelligence as a diadem,” sensitive no longer to the blind might and nameless terrors of an unintelligible world, but awake to its meaning and beauty and bounteousness, as in obedience to his will it lays at his feet the commodities natural and spiritual of every clime.

And if we ask further how this miracle has come about, I know no truer answer than to say “by borrowing and lending.” Men have shared their daily wants, and have been partners in poverty, and in that partnership have formed themselves: and the generations, conserving the slowly garnered gains, have made of their concerns one cause. By a process that has been continuous and very strange, ‘Organized Society’ has come to be; and organized society is at once the product and the means,

the inspiration and the impelling power of all man's knowing and doing.

The highest form of society, the most momentous in power for good and evil, and, so far, man's greatest achievement, is the "Civilised Modern State." If we knew how it has come to be, we should know man very fully. But its origin and its growth are alike mysterious. "Like a vast primaeval forest, it looks a thing self-sown, always living and always dying, and renewing its immortality from age to age. No one has planned it; every one has been at the planting of it. But it has its laws of growth all the same, and its own grave grandeur. Every individual within it, struggling for his own life, and reaching up towards the sunlight, contributes not only to the variety but to the unity of the whole. The statesman . . . the artist, the preacher, the legislator, the judge, the soldier, the maker and manipulator of tools, the tiller of the soil; the wise and the good in every degree, nay the foolish and the wicked—and the philosopher who may be neither or both—have by their experiments, negative and positive, for successive generations shed their lives like forest leaves to make the black soil on which its institutions grow."¹ Verily, no human fabric can compare with this strange structure.

But there is another side to the picture. I look around and I find the world at war. The nations which we call civilized, have gathered together and massed their powers of every kind for mutual destruction; and *they have done this in pursuit of the 'good'!* Imagination is overawed by the scene, and reason staggers at the cause of it. Facing that which threatens final bankruptcy, as they make one huge holocaust of all their

¹ *The Working Faith of the Social Reformer*, p. 17 ff.

slowly garnered wealth, spiritual and material; casting, it would seem, their very souls into the fire, all men alike are driven back upon themselves in most earnest questioning. What fell cause is it which has had such potency as to bring upon mankind this universal disaster? Only if we discover that cause can we prevent the wrecking of the social structure, and the turning of man's wisdom once more into folly and his strength into worse than weakness.

As the struggle continues and intensifies and extends, reflexion has become more earnest and there is some promise that the light will break and dispel the darkness. The problem is at least both ^{Reflexion} on the cause. more clear and more urgent; and the clearer statement and franker facing of a problem are (as a rule) the first stages in its solution. Already we find that thoughtful men on all sides unite to suggest one and the same cause, the most fundamental they can find as yet, of the unparalleled situation.

By some intricate play of the forces which have combined and clashed in their history, and as the result of the interaction of their native endowment and their ^{Warring} outer circumstance, physical and social, the ^{conceptions} most powerful nations of the world, and in ^{of national} good. many ways the most enlightened, have come to entertain different and irreconcilably antagonistic conceptions of what is desirable as their highest good. The good they have severally conceived has for the opposing powers such value and sovereign authority that it is their duty and privilege to devote all that they possess and all that they are to its attainment. No price, reckoned in any terms you please, is too high to pay for the triumph of their cause—not the suffering and the

slaughter on the battlefields, not the weight of anxiety and mourning on every hearth at home, not the draining to the lees of the best strength of the generations yet to come.

It is a conflict of ideals, as we all too glibly say, little realizing, as a rule, that ideals are the forces of the moral world and the master-powers in the world of ideals. we see. It is these which have forged the machinery of the war, massed its munitions, launched the ships, filled the souls of men with the spirit of destruction and let them loose upon one another on land, in the air, on the sea and under it. Machinery, munitions, ships are but the means and implements of the ideals, and the lives of men are but "fodder." What voice has the German people heard rising clear and authoritative amid all the confusion? It is that of their ideal: *Weltreich oder Niedergang*, the Empire of the World or Downfall. And what is the meaning the Allies are slowly and surely and ever more clearly spelling out in the call that has fallen upon their ear, except that of the dominant will of their Ideal? Not Belgium or Serbia merely any more, nor merely the safety of their own territories from invasion by land or sea, but the freedom of the world or its slavery; mutual respect and responsibility, and the spirit and the security of brotherhood, and within that brotherhood a free destiny for every people great or small—or Death. There is not the least doubt that it was in obedience to these conceptions of 'good' that the nations put on their armour, and it is these and these alone that sustain them in their deadly strife.

One would have thought that, being more or less sane and provident, civilized states, before committing themselves to the service of such all-potent and all-exacting

forces as their national ideals, would have subjected them to the closest scrutiny: summoning their wisest to the task, conjuring them, in this domain of enquiry above all others, to spare no labour of thought, but employing every instrument and means of patient, fearless and conclusive research, to question every fact, to follow every clue, to test every hypothesis, in order to discover, if that be within the range of human faculty, which is the true good and which is the false.

The need of weighing their worth and testing their truth.

Why has this not been done? How is it that the method which, for the sake of effective practice, relies on thorough enquiry has not been adopted? It is not new, nor is its value either obscure or doubtful. We have seen it operative in the domain of natural facts and dealing with the material conditions of human well-being. Our reliance on the spirit which animates it, the spirit of untrammelled and unwearied research, is complete so far as concerns the fields of science. We would not hamper natural science by binding it down to the traditions of the past, nor have it betray itself by turning its results into dogmata never to be examined or doubted any more. We would bid it be yet more daring, more relentless, more persevering, and fitting it yet better for its task, multiply its laboratories, equip it ever with more perfect apparatus and endow it ever more richly. And we know we are justified in our attitude, and that our expectations will not turn out false. There is hardly a scientific laboratory in all the land, and they are very many and devoted to many purposes, out of which some proof of the beneficent effectiveness of pure enquiry has not issued clear and convincing.

The method of scientific enquiry is trusted in natural facts.

The cumulative results of all these enquiries has been to

*

make a new world for man, and to improve beyond the dreams of previous ages the conditions of his material well-being. No one entertains any doubts as to the cause of this vast change, nor as to the structural changes in human society which have accompanied it: they are the conquests of the spirit which fearlessly seeks the truth.

It seems to me that the time has come when we should ask with new earnestness of purpose, whether we ought not

Why is it
not trusted
in morals? to approach and deal with the facts of the moral world in the spirit of natural science, and expect analogous results. Are there any convincing reasons which justify the difference of our attitude towards enquiry in these two regions? Let us examine some of them.

We may begin with what conceivably might be averred but is not, except by a scepticism which is so extreme as to

There are
moral laws
as there are
natural
laws. be entertained but rarely: the scepticism which affirms that the facts of the moral region are not subject to any laws, or that it is the sphere of pure contingency, where any ante-

cedent may be followed by any consequent or by none at all. Confusion and disorder are more than evident on the surface of human history; but they issue, not from the absence of moral laws, but from man's ignorance and violation of them. His disobedience to the moral laws does not annul them. He cannot overturn their authority, nor suspend their operation. They are unchanging, unsleeping, universal. Nations rise and fall as they are respected or violated. Evidence of their operation is written on every page of man's history, and we can find it in our own lives; the witnesses to their power in the lives of men and nations are innumerable, and they

all testify to the same truth : that man's destiny lies within them and in his dealing with them. In a word, there can be no question as to what things, in the last resort, make or unmake the well-being of mankind : they are the forces of the moral world. Why, then, are they not the primary objects of our solicitude and enquiry ? Can it be that they are not intelligible ? The answer, once more, will be, except on the part of the extreme sceptic, in the negative. It is not maintained, except most rarely, that the laws of right conduct cannot be known, that the facts of the moral world are mere enigmata, or its principles beyond human reach. On the contrary, they are very near to every one and very plain. " And an high-way shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness . . . the way-faring men, though fools shall not err therein." There are none so distrustful of theoretic search in this domain as those who believe, and in a sense, believe rightly, that the simple shall inherit the kingdom of heaven.

What is maintained is that the facts and laws of the moral world are known in other ways than the ways of science. While science employs reason, almost every other apparatus is commended to those who would search into the things of the spirit ; and the methods of the reasoning intelligence are condemned. In consequence, the spirit of pure and unhesitating enquiry in this region is comparatively rare and much distrusted. Thinking on these highest matters has fallen into disrepute. " Intellectualist " is a term of contempt, as " Free-thinker " was a generation or two ago. The ' intellectualist ' has come to mean an apathetic looker-on at life, the bloodless remnant of man which deals in empty abstractions. Reason is reduced into a formal

The moral laws are not unintelligible.

Yet the use of the intelligence is in moral matters suspected.

faculty and is at the best most fallible. It must not only borrow all its premisses from experience, but, having borrowed them, it can only restate them in a pretentious order. It is capable neither of discovering new truth—of passing beyond its premisses—nor of controlling man's conduct. These functions, so far as concern the inner life of man, are divided between "the subconscious powers" which operate below, and the "intuition" which is above reason. And instead of the toilsome research which observes, and waits and interrogates the outer fact, and strives above all things to eject "the personal factor" which in every other science distorts, the individual, in the matters that concern his moral life, has but to listen to his own feelings: they gain the truth at first leap. And there is no appeal against the findings of either feeling or intuition. Argument is vain and out of place; man has but to lay his hand upon his heart, and to say that he "*feels*" the facts to be so and so, and the facts *are* so and so for him. And every one else's inner voice has the same final authority for its owner. Let him have "faith": while reason is tossed from side to side by its alternate pros and cons, faith's guidance is unhesitating and secure.

Now, I would ask, Why is it that these arguments are not applied in the same way to the scientific man? He is

The same arguments can be urged against the moralist and the man of science.

not constituted either intellectually or emotionally of different elements from those which make up the moral enquirer. Why is natural science given the monopoly of the use of reason? His methods of research, as he will readily acknowledge, are not infallible; discoveries of which he has been proud have turned out to be illusions; he has built his splendid structure out of the ruins of

many failures. He cannot, as a rule, withstand by argument the assaults of the sceptical epistemologist, nor defend the logical methods which he employs. We may urge against him that the range of the intellect is narrow, that its reach is short and stops at outside appearances—mere phenomena; that the surest sciences start from assumptions, and that their most vaunted laws are but guesses and hypotheses. The physicist, together with his brother workers in other sciences, will admit the charge. But he will answer: reason is the best guide I have; my guesses are happy guesses because they are made by reason; and my hypotheses grow in security with every application to the facts which they illumine and which they convert into instruments of man's well-being. If, again, we bid the physicist 'trust his heart,' because the light of the intellect is cold, and to appeal to his intuitions because they outstrip reason, he will reply: it is the light which the intellect kindles that warms the heart, and intuition is the reward of research. Intuition comes not to the ignorant, but to our Newtons and Kelvins. It is the sudden blossom that breaks out on the tree of knowledge, after the long slow winter of enquiring thought. Hand over the realm of nature to the poet, we urge; for has it not been well said of old that poetry is truer than science. 'The task of poetry is one,' he answers, 'and mine another. The poet remakes the world for me and I for him; we are fellow-labourers. He takes this very world of time in which I live, and by an incantation he rebuilds it for me, so that for an instant I see it under a light that is not the light of time.'¹ I remain in his debt after all I can do for him, and I rejoice in my bankruptcy.

Now, why may not the same answer be made to the same

¹ Newbolt's *New Study of English Poetry*.

objections on behalf of the moral philosopher? Or why are the arguments of the critic assumed to have destructive cogency in the one case and not in the other? Why should not the moralist be allowed to employ such reason as he has to the uttermost, even as the scientific man does? Or why, on the other hand, should emotion, intuition, feeling, the heart, and the whole apparatus of the so-called 'subconscious region' have attributed to them a different range and power and value in the two cases? In one word, why should faith rest on reasoned knowledge for the one, and for the other stand in fear of reasoned knowledge?

I do not wish in the least degree to deny the significance of what men call their 'subconscious powers,' or to minimise the function of feeling, or the value of the insight of intuition, or, least of all, the potency of a man's faith. There is, in fact, not one of these which is not, in its own way, operative in the mind of the man of science as he interprets the natural world. But it would be well to know what their functions are. It is at least possible that the 'subconscious powers' are but knowledge, true or false, worked in the past into the structure of the mind; that they are old convictions which are themselves the results of thought's striving in the past; sunken truths and errors once consciously held, and the results of the daring discovery of adventurous reasoning on some one's part. *Emotion* is the after-glow of man's rational dealing with his world, a priceless gift effective in breaking the slumber of our sluggish powers, and heightening their activities for good and evil; but it is not an instrument of enquiry, and it yields neither truth nor error.

Why are they assumed to be valid in one case and not in the other?

Examination of the apparatus recommended instead of the intellect.

Feelings do not think ; they do not perform the functions of the intellect in addition to their own. There is no doubt that men have what we call *Intuitions*. They leap forth, like fire from flint, at the impact of apparently conflicting truths and the collision of seeming law with law ; and for the time they end our difficulties. But are they anything other than thought itself at what seems the instant of its triumph over difficulties ; the first streaks of light following nights of long reflexion ? And are intuitions not sometimes true and sometimes false ? The scientific man has his intuitions, but he tests them. And the religious man and moralist ought to test them, for they may be mere prejudices and ignorance dogmatizing. And as to *Faith*, verily, faith is potent. It has been well said that nothing great was ever done without faith. It is a most confident and inspiring guide. But it is not always reliable. As '*the heart*,' which is often another of the substitutes for reason, has often squandered its gifts on unworthy objects, so has faith often led men astray. If, on the one hand, neither man nor nation has ever travelled far except by faith ; on the other, faith has led both men and nations in every direction, right and wrong, which the heart of man could conceive. None of these powers can do the work of reason ; the truths that a crude and metaphorical psychology attributes to their activity stand in need of scrutiny and cannot be taken on trust. In the provinces of natural science, law, business, they *are* scrutinized : in morals and religion they are set up as authoritative from which there must be no appeal. These substitutes for reason are but a subterfuge, resorted to by those who fear the light of reason : while a stronger faith in the truth challenges reason and welcomes its assaults.

There is only one way of knowing, and only one instrument of knowledge. It is the intelligence. And reasoning enters into *every act* of knowledge whether we can follow its steps and processes, as the logician professes to do, or not. The powers of the soul of the scientific man are of the same kind, and they operate in the same way as those of the moral philosopher; they are subject to the same limitations, they call for the same watchful scrutiny, and they deserve the same trust.

But, it may be asked, does not much depend on the character of the objects upon which the intelligence operates, and do not our methods differ according to the things we wish to comprehend? And must we not distinguish decisively between those of the natural and those of the moral world? The world of facts to which natural science applies its methods is there ready at his hand, while that of the moral philosopher is only in the making. No one has expressed this difficulty more clearly than Hegel, for no one knew better how the world of the things of spirit is ever being built anew; and he seems to say that the attempt of the moral philosopher to anticipate experience and exercise foresight for the behoof of such a moving world must be vain. "As to *teaching* the world how it ought to be," says Hegel, "philosophy always comes too late. As the *thought* of the world it first appears after what is real has completed its process of building and finished its work. The ideal must first stand over against the real, as both reflexion and history show; and, grasping its substance, it must construct it anew and give it the form of an intellectual realm. When philosophy paints its grey in grey, then has some form of life become old; and with the grey in grey it does not allow

itself to be made young again, but only to be known. The owl of Minerva first begins its flight when the evening twilight begins to fall.”¹

This looks like the defence of sheer Empiricism, and Empiricism has no foresight, nor does it pretend to any.

“It waits” in order to see, and sees too late. It finds the better by exhausting the worse. Statesmanship, whose material is man, whose purpose must, as I shall try to show, be moral, and which is the supreme art of character-building, must, on this view, wait till necessity drives. While natural science, relying upon the constancy of natural law, predicts, prediction in the region of character and nation-building is not possible. But is this the whole truth? If so, then indeed would the methods of reason fail in their application to the moral world. But it is only a half truth, as Hegel himself knew well. The world of man’s experience as a moral, that is, a social being, must indeed be present to set the problem to the philosopher just as the stars and planets must be in the heavens for the astronomer. And the fact which sets the problem to the thinker is always that which contains the solution. The intelligence, at best, can comprehend only what lies before it.

What Hegel was pleading for was the trustful and adventurous dealing by reason with the facts; and what he distrusted was the ideals not found by reason as the truth of the facts, but invented by easier and more flattering methods. Amongst the secrets hidden in the facts of the moral world there were for him the possibilities, nay the necessities, of the future. The laws, or as I would

The helplessness of pure empiricism.

The evolutionist is not a mere empiricist: he finds the future in the present.

¹ Preface to the *Rechtsphilosophie*.

say, the structural principles of the moral world were for him living powers, revealing their significance more and more fully as the human civilization, in which they incarnated themselves, developed. The experience he would interpret was a growing experience ; and he knew that there are no stepping-stones, for either men or nations, except dead selves. But, on the other hand, the selves die to live again : ' die to live ' is the inmost law of the moral world. And true thinking seizes this inner law, which is the law of the future dwelling in the present. It is the faculty of foresight, because it is the faculty of insight. And it sets free for the good of mankind the truth that shall make *them* free.

Man cannot choose whether he shall or shall not employ his reason. He cannot divest himself of this power and propensity and remain man : he can only use it ill or well, arresting or fostering its development by its exercise. Nor can he prevent his thinking from reacting on his conduct, or his faith from forming his character. And the faith that does not enquire is a dangerous possession, especially if it is a faith in ideals : for these are, whether true or false, the causes of his actions. The German nation has its faith, just as the Allies have ; it is its conception of a national good, and it is at its work forging their history. If we were to distinguish between them and ourselves, we must say that they have held their faith more consciously and for a longer time than we have done ; they have held it more unanimously and defined it more clearly and obeyed it more consistently. But it is not a faith based upon enquiry into the fundamental principles of national well-being, or into the truths of the moral world and the validity of moral ideals.

Knowledge
issues in
faith and
faith in con-
duct. Hence
knowledge
had better
be reasoned.

Germany has taken pains for many years, not to discover the foundations of a lasting and secure national good, but to inoculate its people, from their youth upwards, in a crude and barbarous national faith which moral enquiry would have proved false and whose power it would have destroyed. We on our part have, I believe, risen to a new and better political faith, and begun to define it in the light of the war and in virtue of the more earnest moral spirit which the war has awakened. Neither their faith nor ours is independent of national experience, and both alike constrain reflexion. The greatest task ever set mankind ought now to be known as that of seeking the truth in moral matters, and discerning the false good and the true: for the destiny of nations lies in their ideals. Let me, in conclusion, dwell a little on this matter.

Ever since the Hohenzollerns first tyrannized over their meek and kindly Swabian neighbours, Germany, or at least the part of Germany which most counts so far, namely Prussia, has trusted in the crude and barbaric greatness of tyrannic power. Its end has been to dominate, and its means have been armed force. This is *the* conception of national 'good' and of the way to attain it which the Prussians have entertained. Nor must we deny them such credit as belonged to their intentions. They were in a way benevolent. The Germans wished to impose their will on other peoples, and compel them to adopt their way of life, which they call their *Kultur*, because they believed their way of life to be the best. And their ideal has led them far in their career of conquest, though without any very obvious benefit to the world. But their historians have proudly told the tale of their imperial expansion as if mere size were greatness;

Germany's fatal choice of its false national ideal due to its ignorance of the good.

and their rhapsodists, Nietzschean and others, have celebrated the virtues of the faith in the Super-man whose might is his 'right.'

But what is to be said of the validity of this faith? It is on its trial; and the nature of things sits in the judgment-seat. It has been on its trial before, many times. The late
dawning of
our own
better faith. France entertained the same faith till just the other day. It held it under Louis the Fourteenth, and once more under Napoleon. It was also Britain's faith, till we sought to put it in practice upon the children of our own loins. But America, and a certain shrewdness in our dealing with barbarous peoples and with civilizations become decrepit with age, together with a half-blind and most chequered habit and spirit of fairplay and a long political experience, have helped us slowly towards a light which we think truer. Britain has begun to believe in the loyalty that comes from liberty, and to respect the rights of other nations, great or small, and to 'reverence their personality.' And its political ideal is broadening. It is now setting itself to escape beyond the limits of the merely negative respect for others implied in national 'Individualism.' It is no longer content with the faith which it maintained till quite recently, that the concern of every nation is with itself alone, and that its mission, so far as it is practicable, is simply to let other nations be. The policy of exclusion is found not to be practicable: it is the one thing that is impracticable. Neither nations nor individuals can isolate themselves. They must either co-operate or collide. They must work for one another either weal or woe, and cannot escape the responsibility of their kinship. And at last, taught by our afflictions, we are accepting that responsibility. We are reinterpreting the idea of freedom, and setting out

to prove that 'perfect freedom' expresses itself only in mutual service. And we believe that freedom is founded only upon the righteousness, whose strength is that of the everlasting mountains. What we would 'enforce' is peace, and peace means liberty within the moral law.

The contrast of the two faiths is very striking. They are alike only in that their worth seems to be supreme, that their authority where they are respectively entertained is unlimited, that by an inner necessity they must seek universal dominion, and that they have been adopted not as the result of enquiry and reflective thought, but as the result of the apparently contingent interplay of national temperament and historical circumstance. Germany, in virtue of its ideal of armed ascendancy, *must* ever quarrel with its nearest neighbour and strive to subdue it. It *must* seek universal dominion. Britain, in like manner, cannot attain its ideal until every people alike is both sovereign and subject. Its ideal is the Christian ideal applied to, or rather adopted by nations, and it is not attained or secure until it is adopted by all. Moreover, both alike must be able to apply force. The powers of the moral world, whether good or evil, never are in the air. They must have a footing in the world of time, incarnate themselves and beat as a pulse in outward circumstance. But there is a difference wide as the poles between "forcing" a people "to be free," to use the phrase of Rousseau, and forcing them into slavery. And the difference in the aims brings with it a contrast in the means employed to attain them. Armed compulsion is in the one case an unwelcome last necessity directed against a wicked will; in the other it is valued for its own sake. For Germany, it is peace which is evil :

The two
national
faiths com-
pared :
(a) The
German
faith.

*“Denn der Mensch verkümmert im Frieden,
 Müßige Ruh ist das Grab des Muts.
 Das Gesetz ist der Freund des Schwachen,
 Alles will es nur eben machen.
 Möchte gern die Welt verflachen
 Aber der Krieg lässt die Kraft erscheinen.”*¹

No contrast between two faiths could be more clear or decisive, and that they shall try their strength by conflict is inevitable. Both nations seek what they conceive to be good—the supreme good of their own political State; but that good for Germany is not a ‘moral’ good. That the State as a State is not concerned with morality is a discovery of which the Germans are proud! Their statesmen, their political thinkers, their official classes, their intellectual no less than their landed aristocracy, their military leaders and all their petty autocracies, have left no room for the world to err as to this article of their faith. Morality concerns individuals, not States. The State has only one Duty. It is a duty to itself only, for there is no higher authority than itself: it is to be *strong*. “The State is no academy of Arts; if it neglects its power in favour of the ideal strivings of mankind, it renounces its nature and goes to ruin,”² says Treitschke. And when the State goes to ruin, nothing is left for man but to set forthwith to building another in its stead. The test of right is might; and at the back of might stands the nature of things. “It is the eternal, unchangeable decree of God that the most powerful must rule, and will for ever rule.”³

¹ Quoted by Romain Rolland, *Above the Battle*, p. 28.

² Muirhead, *German Philosophy and the War*, p. 85.

³ *Ibid.* p. 36.

Right across this path, in direct contradiction to this conception of the State, lies the faith found by Britain and its allies. It maintains that in its substance, (b) The faith of Great Britain and its allies. essence and structure, in its purpose and its instruments, the State is moral. Its builders are moral beings seeking a moral good; and in the course of constructing it they have made and are making themselves. Neither man nor society, neither citizen nor State, has priority over the other. They come into being in virtue of each other. They live in and through each other. For this is a living structure, and in no sense a mechanism. 'Force' will not explain it, any more than it can create or conserve it. It has been called into being and it is maintained in existence by a gentler, a more persuasive and, we can add, a more irresistible power.

"For, an ye heard a music, like enow
They are building still, seeing the City is built
To music; therefore never built at all,
And therefore built for ever."

It is obtrusively obvious that the conflict is a conflict of national ideals: everyone says so. Whence does it arise? Is it not due, in part at all events, to the fact that neither nation has applied itself with true and serious intentions to the *scientific* study of the ends and conditions of human life? What can be said of a method of knowing which could lead to contradictory conclusions as to the nature of the social structure in which man lives and moves and has his being? It has failed and ought to be discarded. It is time that we should see that in the sphere of individual and national morality, as in that of natural science, 'Custom and Tradition' are just habit and hearsay; that feeling

Costliness of the methods of ignorance in morals.

comes too late to guide, seeing that it arises from experience, cannot therefore go before it, and is, in fact, only a reflected sense of its private value ; and that ' Intuition and Faith ' may both alike be either true or false. Trusting to these, and distrusting reason, recoiling from the doubt which ' shakes the torpor of assurance from its creeds,' resenting as an injury whatever impels it to test the hypotheses on which its faith is founded, humanity has stumbled blindly on its way towards well-being, and found it long and rugged. Its progress, in consequence, has been costly beyond all computation.

Is it not plain that man prospers only in that which he comprehends and according to the measure of his comprehension ; and that he comprehends only where thinking is earnest, persistent, a battle with error and a process of self-correction at every step ? ' But such earnest and self-correcting thought has been given to other matters than those of the spirit. Other needs have been more insistent, and their pressure has been found more urgent. The problem of living has called more imperiously for solution than that of living well. In building our new ' civilization,' we have not listened to the voice which tells us what to ' seek first.' We have sought earnestly in these new times, and we have found much. This is the ' Age of Science ' we say with truth and just pride ; but when we speak or hear the phrase we do not think of what has been called ' the master-science,' and called justly, if ' character ' verily determines the value of all other gains for both men and nations.

Science discovers, discovery brings invention in its train, and invention is the practical use of the powers of the world. Science lets loose the forces which change the

Man's well-being depends on what engages his thought and on what he seeks first.

conditions under which men live. Nor is the connection between ideas and deeds loose or contingent. On the contrary, thought inevitably breaks out into practice, and ideas are deeds in the making. The nexus holds in morals, no less than in the natural sphere. If we know what a nation or an individual thinks about, we can foresee to no small extent what it will do. For many years Germany, with admirable thoroughness and persistence and method, has devoted itself to the discovery of the forces of truth in the natural world, and to the use of them for the economic and military ends in the attainment of which it thought to find its 'good.' And it has succeeded well in these domains. On the other hand, its old 'Idealism,' having been neglected, has lost its truth with its charm. And no other significant way of thinking of the spiritual conditions of human well-being has for three generations engaged its mind, nor therefore, ruled its practice. The result is obvious. No one can for a moment maintain that Germany's moral progress has kept pace with its economic and military strength.

And have we ourselves been faultless? Or must we not confess rather that we are not without sin and cannot be "first to cast a stone at it." We have sought first and second material prosperity; and we have found much more of it than we have learnt to use wisely. Is it not true on the whole that such moral gains as we have made have come by the way? That they are few is made more than evident by the confusion that reigns in the economic sphere itself. The relations between capital and labour, so far as their use of the merely material and physical forces is concerned, are civilized; so far as they are moral or *human*, are they not very crude and barbarous in many of our huge industries, and were they not more

civilized in the little workshops where master and man worked side by side? Verily, if our understanding and mastery of ourselves had moved step by step with our mastery of matter, our prosperity would have had another character and a safer footing, and we could look to the future with less concern. We hear of one whose "delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night"; and we are told the result: "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." Can the British people find its features in that picture? Before it can do so it must set a higher value on the Science of the things of the Spirit.

CHAPTER

CONFLICTING THEORIES OF THE NATURE OF THE STATE

AT the close of the last chapter I indicated the main purpose of this little book. It is to show that the welfare of the State and the well-being of the citizens depend upon moral conditions; and that the recognition of this truth stands foremost amongst our practical needs.

“So far as opinions have a weight,” says a most clear and careful thinker, “there are not many which more retard [our] advance than the idea that the State is a mere organ of ‘secular’ force. That it is so seems to be the theoretical, though not the practical, belief of most Englishmen; and Aristotle’s fundamental position, that its object is nothing short of ‘noble living’ seems to separate his view decisively from ours. The partial truths that the law takes no account of character, and that government ought not to enforce morality or interfere with private life, seem to be the main expressions of this apparent separation.”¹

Two views
of the nature
of the State.

The accuracy of this description is undeniable. All of us alike make demands upon the State which only a moral being can fulfil, and all of us examine, approve, or

¹ A. C. Bradley’s essay on *Aristotle’s Conception of the State: Hellenica*, p. 242.

condemn the actions of the State by reference to a standard which is applicable only to a moral being. We demand that the State shall seek and secure some kind of good for its citizens; and, to mention only one instance, we call its behaviour towards its citizens just or unjust, wise or foolish, right or wrong. On the other hand, we all regard the State as an indispensable instrument of the well-being of its citizens, and if we reflect a little we find that it is a condition not only of his physical but of his moral well-being; but we generally regard it as nothing but their instrument—a mere means which man has invented in order to attain and secure his present ends. Its value in use is inestimable, and we do well to keep it in repair and to protect it against dangers from within and without. But its value *is* in its use, and not in itself. It is not an end in itself; far less is it an object of reverence as a moral personality always is. If the service of the State is seen to be obligatory, and a privilege, it is only because through it we are of service to ourselves and to our fellow-citizens. In short the State is an ‘organ,’ and, moreover, we regard it as a ‘secular’ organ. It can recognize only the external conditions of the well-being of its citizens, and can no more interfere directly with the inner side of a ‘good life’ than natural circumstances can. Man may attain what is good by its means, but it can neither attain nor even seek a good for itself. To make the State an end in itself were ‘to make too much of the State’; and that, we hear on all hands, is one of the main causes, perhaps the primary cause, of the present war.

It is evident that a contradiction between theory and practice is highly undesirable. It brings dispeace in both regions. Such a contradiction is a common, one would perhaps say, a universal feature of man’s life: our

theories are sometimes much better and sometimes much worse and more foolish than our practice. But the contradiction is always costly, and in the end intolerable. The conflicting powers interfere with one another, and block one another's way, and prevent us from moving consistently in any direction. They cannot be kept asunder, but must conflict. For, after all, theory and practice do not occupy independent spheres. There is *no* practice which is not the carrying out of some conception, and no theory which is otiose and inert. Ideas have hands and feet. We live to carry them out. A wrong theory of the State and of its relations to its citizens or to other States is bound in the long run to tell upon its practice : and, on the other hand, the practical interaction of the State and its citizens furnishes the only material which political theory can either interpret or misinterpret. Blunders in our practice can, and even must, change our theories. Their full result is not only to fail in working, but to refute opinions. Failure in working is often the most thorough way, the most fully enlightening ; but it is always the most costly. The pragmatic test is admirable, but only in so far as it *teaches*, that is to say, issues in a better theory.

The contradiction of theory and practice is unsatisfactory.

It follows that, in human affairs, the clearing of the issues between man's practice and theory is a paramount condition of progress. And amongst the results of the war—the unforeseen results—which may prove in the highest degree beneficent to mankind, I count it not the least that the question whether the State is or is not a moral agent has been clearly raised, and raised in a fashion that is imperative. The most powerful nations of the world are forced by the current of their character and history to

face this question, and to seek its solution, in the first instance, by the costly methods of war.

The world owes this debt primarily to Germany, which has forced the problem upon the civilized nations in an unambiguous way. As we have already seen, both by its recent practice and in its most modern theories of the nature of the State, it has repudiated the obligations which we call moral. According to the doctrines of many of its historians and political thinkers morality concerns individuals only. It is the result of the interaction and intercourse of individuals within the State, and its laws are obligatory upon them ; but the State itself stands 'above' and outside of all such laws. It has no duties except to its exclusive self. But morality recognizes no obligations of that kind. *Every moral good is a 'common good,' and every moral law is binding on 'all rational beings.'*

By repudiating moral obligations in at least some of its practical dealings with its neighbours, Germany has compelled other nations to reconsider their own. Their traditional 'Individualism,' seen in the light of German thoroughness in egoism, has become suspect. They are coming more decisively and clearly to the conclusion, as the war continues and its disasters deepen, that the pursuit by political States of their own exclusive well-being is a principle of action that can be carried too far, which is the sure mark of error. They are learning that they are responsible for one another ; must care for one another, help one another towards liberty, independence, and the evolution of whatever is best ; and respect one another as ends in themselves, knowing that they *are* ends in themselves and objects of mutual regard just *because* they are all alike 'suppliants for the control' of the moral law. One would like to believe that their practice in the future will harmonize with their

view, and that they will be allies in the affairs of peace and rivals only in mutual helpfulness, as they are in those of war. But the ascent to that moral altitude is long and steep. They will, no doubt, collapse back often into many of the old ambiguities and compromises and contradictions. But they cannot any longer retain the comfort and complacency of a past that was disturbed by no generous ideals. Their conscience thus awakened will prove a principle of consistency and gain authority—unless, by the collapse of civilization itself, it is extinguished and exposed as an appanage irrelevant to the ways of the State, and a costly encumbrance.

That the destiny of an individual is determined by his attitude towards the moral law few men will question. And henceforth it is probable that mankind will believe that the destiny of the political State is determined in the same way. This moral hypothesis is being subjected to the test of experiment on a scale never known before. It is not merely that the conflict has had no parallel in extent during the whole course of man's history, but that the ideals which inspire the conflict were never before in such direct antagonism. For the question at issue is whether the political State, by its intrinsic structure and purpose, is or is not subject to a law which identifies (and not merely reconciles) the good of a State with the good of all States, or whether it is a law to itself alone. The antithesis can take two forms. A State that is not moral may be either *non-moral* or *im-moral*; that is to say, it may be outside—'above' or below—the obligations of the moral law, and have no concern with it, positive or negative; or it may in its ends and actions violate that law. Both of these views are held, and it may be well to distinguish between them and to examine them.

It is maintained that moral criteria cannot be employed in any judgment which concerns the State. On this view, it is as irrelevant to speak of its actions as morally good or bad, as to speak of them as red or yellow. "What's good? What's bad?" cries Stirner, one of the predecessors of Nietzsche. "I myself am my own concern and I am neither good nor bad. Neither has any meaning for me."¹ It is this claim that is made on behalf of the State when German writers say that 'The State is above morality,' or is rejected when we ourselves say that 'The State is made too much of' by such writers. But is this the way to represent its work? Does the State differ from its citizens to *this* extent? For it is manifest that we should not be honouring man by regarding him as neither good nor bad whatever he does. Instead of 'making too much' of him we should degrade him to the level of the brute.

What can the phrase 'above morality' mean when applied to the State? Metaphysicians, who are always theologians of one kind or another, have spoken of God as being 'above morality.' And the assumptions on which the statement is made are both interesting and instructive. They presuppose that the moral sphere is the sphere of conflict, and that the conflict must remain undecided. They take it for granted that good and evil are not only relative to one another but that they are *on the same level*, in the sense that neither is possible unless it has the other as its operative opposite. They throw their accent on the negative side of progress, keeping primarily in view what progress casts off. They represent the expansion of the moral ideal, in the process of realizing it, as a proof of its imperfection, thereby assuming that perfection must be

¹Professor Muirhead's *German Philosophy and the War*, p. 69.

static and cannot break out into new perfections. On these assumptions they leave themselves no choice except to regard 'God,' which is 'the word men use to indicate the best they know,' as non-moral, or 'above morality.' Whether they are right or wrong in their view we cannot ask here. It is in any case manifest that the State cannot be regarded as 'above morality' in *this* sense. The State is not too good to be morally good.

Writers on Aesthetics have also regarded moral criteria as irrelevant to art, and morality itself, with its distinctions of good and evil, as a second-best matter. Goethe and Schiller are said to have debated whether the fall of man, by which he came 'to know good and evil,' was worth while or not. Goethe thought not. It would have been better if the sleep of innocence had never been broken. He preferred its placid peace and limited perfection to the endless and inconclusive disquiet of the moral struggle, and, in consequence, I should say, preferred the beautiful to the sublime, and the quiet pastoral to the purifying terrors of Shakespeare's tragedies. It is a very old, and possibly a wholly unnecessary quarrel, this of the artist and moralist; and it probably arises from the fact that *both* morality and art are 'highest;' because either at its best includes the other, as is the way with spiritual qualities. But this, too, is a question we need not now try to decide; for it is certainly not the placid perfection and serenity of Fine Art which raises the State 'above morality.'

Moreover, art is not law-less, nor is each object of art in every sense a law to itself. There is not the least room for caprice in the sphere of art, even although every object of art, in so far as it is beautiful, has its own unique perfection. Be it a noble poem, or painting, or statue, it is unlike every other, and stands justified in itself, and apart

from every context. But it is a unity, a whole, a harmony of many elements, and the simplest example of infinitude which man knows. And the *laws* of such a harmony are binding on all Art in all its departments.

But when we are told that the State is 'above morality' we are to understand that it is subject to no law save of its own will. It cannot sin except against itself. Its egoism or exclusive self-reference is complete. It is lawless in all respects save one: it must be loyal to its own caprice! Its will for the moment must be supreme: otherwise, it does not need to be self-consistent. Any treaties it makes are concluded with a mental reservation, *rebus sic stantibus*; and its promises are not promises, for it is understood that they are not binding. They are dissoluble at will, and therefore mean nothing.

One thing only, we are further told, is an imperative necessity for the State. "No State in the wide world can venture to relinquish the ego of its sovereignty.¹" Further, its sovereignty is based upon its strength. And its strength is measured in terms of force, that is to say, in its power to compel. Its attitude towards the Universe is that of strain; and every such State is obviously directly inimical to every other State. It is also in relation to its own citizens an undisguised despot. "The state is in the first instance power, in order to maintain itself. It is not the totality of the people itself. On principle it does not ask how the people is disposed; it demands obedience."² For the State to postpone the care of its own power in favour of the ethical or artistic or religious ideals of mankind were, as we have seen, "to renounce its nature and go to ruin." Hence it follows that

¹ Muirhead, *German Philosophy and the War*, p. 88.

² *Ibid.* p. 85.

the ideal form of the State is not that in which its citizens find themselves most freely and fully—but the monarchy—a real monarchy. And there is only one of that kind. “Prussia alone has still a real monarch who is entirely independent of any higher power.” Haeckel is in complete accord with Nietzsche as he applies to States the principle of ‘the struggle for existence,’—though that, by the bye, is not wholly true even of animals, some of which have a ‘herd’ conscience and love their young. The only *real* and successful State is that which is faithful to “the purely selfish morality of the human community.” “The marvellous world-politics of modern England is the direct contradiction of every precept of Christian charity,” and of its hypocritical profession of “the *ideal* altruistic morality of the individual.”

How far this view of the State is entertained by the German people and how far it has affected their conduct it is not necessary to enquire; for we are not engaged in passing judgment upon them, but in discovering whether this view of the State is true or false. One conclusion we can draw: it is manifestly absurd to characterise such a State as ‘above morality.’ Nothing short of a ‘transvaluation’ of values which destroys all moral values and subverts the meaning of all moral terms will enable us to approve of it. It has nothing to do with morality except in one respect—it repudiates it.

How, then, are we to conceive such a State? In so far as all moral criteria are inapplicable to it, we must regard it as *non-moral*. The law of its existence is *Non-moral* that of a purely natural being. It must main- or immoral? tain itself by physical force. But so far as it recognizes and repudiates morality it must be called *im-moral*. It is aware of and has a choice between different ways of behaviour,

which, we consider, is not possible for animals, and it rejects those ways which we approve as morally right and good in individuals. Hence it occupies an ambiguous position ; and it is questionable if it is not compacted of such incompatible elements as to be unworkable in practice, and, in theory, nothing better than the product of confused thinking.

If it were *non-moral*, it would be innocent. And innocence has its own place and value. Innocence is always justified as it stands, for it can be compared only with itself. More strictly speaking it cannot be haled before any court, for either praise or blame. We can only say " There it is, and it is as it must be." If we call it bad or good, in any sense (as we are constantly doing of all natural objects), it is always by reference to some standard or purpose of our own, with which it has nothing to do. Hence it may be called bad from one point of view and good from another, while it is intrinsically neither the one nor the other. A tiger in the jungle is admirable for the biologist, and amongst its cubs a thing of beauty for the artist ; if it raids a native village and carries off one of its children, we think of it in other terms. In truth it is as ' innocent ' in the last case as in the others. All the values we attribute to it are artificial and contingent and irrelevant. They do not belong to it. It is mere ' means,' and ' means ' has at best only derivative value, reflected back upon it by the purpose.

Now, if the State were simply *non-moral* it could have a similar excellence, namely, that of value-in-use. As a subservient object it could supply man with material essential to his well-being. As a force it could immensely increase his power. He might find a sublimity in its order greater than that which he finds in the physical cosmos : and the conflict of its elements might have a range and

grandeur beyond all the tempests of wind and sea. And it would be always, intrinsically, innocent and admirable.

But it is denied these excellences ; for it must not be the means of any purpose to any person, or collection of persons. It is endowed with a will, which is sovereign in the sense of recognizing no law except its own caprice. Unlike natural objects, it cannot be fitted into any scheme, nor stand in any relation to other objects except that of resistance and compulsion. It breaks loose from and threatens every wider order, snapping every law, and is simply a chaotic force, so long, at least, as its sovereignty is incomplete. And consequently, with quite strict logic and sound reasoning, war is its native element, its path of progress and way of life. Those things alone are ' good ' which contribute to its success in war, and those alone are bad which threaten the despotism of its sovereign will. For it to tolerate a rival were to betray itself : until it reigns alone, and reigns in a desert so silent that no voice is heard except its own, war is its supreme duty.

Contradiction of the theory of the non-moral State.

It follows that it cannot be said ' to have nothing to do with morality.' It strikes at the heart of liberty, which is the first condition of morality. If it recognizes moral obligations as valuable relations between individuals and a necessary bond amongst its citizens, and finds it impossible to conceive or carry out any purposes except through their aspirations, hopes, and fears ; on the other hand it exploits them for its own ends ; that is to say, it deprives them of the very character with which morality as a pursuit of ends endows them, and reduces them in relation to itself into mere means. Human nature is its ' fodder,' and a more direct contradiction to morality is not conceivable. Such a State is not *non-moral*, but *im-moral*.

Let us look what this means. An immoral being manifestly recognises *and* repudiates moral obligations. But it does not escape beyond their dominion. It has exercised choice, it has willed what it calls its 'good.' Its 'sovereign will,' which exercises the choice, is not simply a natural necessity and endowment, but it is an equipment for achievement. And achievement means that it must pass beyond its present self, and lay hands on and appropriate that which is beyond and without. There are possibilities which irk and press for realization ; and these possibilities are 'the good' it seeks to attain. But this good in turn, which is its ideal, is a limit to its caprice ; its sovereignty must first be recognized and then adopted. The State cannot reject what it conceives as its good, and yet it cannot recognize it without betraying its *own* sovereignty. It is essentially a law-breaker : in contradiction to itself and to everything beyond itself. The idea of a State which is 'above morality' is a masterpiece of stupid thinking.

In so far as an individual approaches this character we do not hesitate to say that he has fallen lower than an animal.

The analogy of the individual. He has fallen from a greater height, and he pulls everything on which he lays his hands down to his own level. His desires are no longer innocent, and they do not accept the limits prescribed by his own well-being. They run into excess and become destructive. Man can be more lustful, more cruel, and in every sense a worse mischief and greater evil to himself and to others than an animal. His capacities have a wider range in every direction ; for his will reaches out upon the world. In virtue of it he is free, and freedom implies that he is not the creature of circumstances but seeks to be their lord. They are the raw material on which he works. He stamps upon them his own character ; and, precisely

in the degree in which he is immoral, taints everything that he touches. Affection becomes lust, hunger an unlimited greed, and every quality which is to the innocent always innocent becomes a vicious propensity. Nothing worse can be conceived than a wholly immoral being. We relegate him to the inferno of mere chaos.

Fortunately such a being is impossible. Such a man and such a State is the monstrous creation, not of the imagination, but of distracted thinking.

The distinction between the moral and the *immoral* being falls within a positive system: opposites must always occupy the same plane. Hence, while the moral and the *non-moral* may coexist in peace, or the latter be the means of the former, and exhibit its full value only in that relation, the moral and the *immoral* are in conflict and mutually destructive. A relation of indifference or of subordination is impossible. On this account it is sometimes held that they are mutually dependent, so that the one cannot be except where the other is. Good, it is said, has no meaning except in opposition to evil. Where there is no real evil to resist—and not merely its barren possibility—there cannot be good; and hence the complete victory over evil which is the aim of the moral process must be a victory that is perpetually receding, and the way of life is an asymptote. With the attainment of the moral end, morality itself would disappear.

The conflict of the moral and immoral.

This is a contingency that we need hardly consider, for neither States nor individuals are in sight of that goal. But I am disposed to think that this view will not bear analysis. It is possible that evil depends upon good in a way that good does not depend upon evil. A positive term in Logic, although the opposite of the negative, is not on a par with it :

the latter borrows its force from the former. And I believe that evil finds in good a law and a condition which good does not find in evil. Evil is a good distorted ; and is no more evil through and through than a negative negates nothing positive. And an immoral being is a moral being perverted, in contradiction with and doing violence to itself. He is assumed to be capable of being, and to know that he ought to be, other than he is ; and the obligation is the deepest element in him and his ultimate essence.

If this is true the State cannot escape its fate by rejecting morality, or claiming to stand 'above' its obligations. It is bound to aim at a moral good, and to base its sovereignty on its obedience to it. For the capacity to choose a way of action recognized as not moral is in fact a capacity of doing either what is right or what is wrong, and an incapacity to *rest* in the latter. The State is a moral agent ; and that means that its native endowment, its deepest and richest, nay, the very principle of its being, is a power and a necessity of achievement ; so that all static points of view are here out of place, and falsify the facts. The moral being is himself *plus* indwelling possibilities of more. The necessities of the future are in his present, and the necessities of the present are in the past. The order of physical existence, or of natural cause and effect, is inverted ; and — 'After last comes the first.' The ideal or final cause is the operative and efficient cause ; and what *is* comes from what 'ought to be.' For this reason the moral being is never tied down by his present and past. They are the raw material of the ideal, limiting but not controlling its activity. Hence, the moral being never repeats himself. He is a new being every morning. Every attainment in either direction is a propulsion onward, and his past and present self a stepping-stone.

And herein his infinitude takes another aspect and acquires a different meaning by that which his freedom implies. His desires, whether good or evil, grow by that which they feed upon. The greed of egoism grows, and it is hurled onwards from disappointment to disappointment. And the hunger and thirst for righteousness, though they *are* satisfied in every righteous act, give rise to a deeper hunger and thirst and to the restlessness which is bliss.

Infinitude
and
progress.

The error of the wrong-doer arises from his attempt to satisfy the claims of an infinite being by means of a finite good. He treats himself as a finite being, which he cannot be, and his efforts to extinguish his yearnings fail. "There is an infinite in him," says Carlyle, "which with all his cunning he cannot quite bury under the Finite. Will the whole Finance Ministers and Upholsterers and Confectioners of modern Europe undertake, in joint-stock Company, to make one Shoeblack Happy? They cannot accomplish it, above an hour or two; for the shoeblack also has a soul quite other than his Stomach; and would require, if you consider it, for his permanent satisfaction and saturation, simply this allotment, no more and no less: God's infinite Universe altogether to himself."¹ Give the Prussian High-taxer Brandenburg and he will want Westphalia; give him both and he will desire Silesia and cast longing eyes on Poland; give him all these and add Schleswig-Holstein and all Germany to boot and he will clamour for the rest of the world. And if he does not get it, he is wronged by those already in possession, and 'kept out of the light of the sun.' "Always," says Carlyle, "there is a black spot in our sunshine: it is even . . . the shadow of ourselves."

Carlyle's remedy is to "escape from our own shadow"; by

¹ *Sartor Resartus*, "The Everlasting Yea."

which he means, to ‘fancy’ ourselves and our deserts less. “Fancy that thou deservest to be hanged (as is most likely),” he humorously adds, “thou wilt feel it happiness to be only shot; fancy that thou deservest to be hanged in a hair-halter, it will be a luxury to die in hemp.” He would ‘increase the Fraction of Life in value not so much by increasing the numerator as by lessening the denominator.’ “Nay, unless my Algebra deceive me, Unity itself divided by Zero will give Infinity. Make thy claim of wages Zero, then; thou hast the world under thy feet.”¹

But the remedy commended by Carlyle is impracticable. Man cannot escape from himself; nor either ‘bury’ or leave behind his infinitude,—on Carlyle’s own showing. Man’s thirst is infinite, and quenchless by any finite means, *because* it is a thirst for good. Rather than attempt to extinguish it, which were his own destruction, let him understand and seek that which will at once satisfy and deepen it. Let him reinterpret the ‘good,’ comprehend its nature more fully, and bow to its law. “Seeking its precepts, he will walk at liberty, and rejoice in the way of its testimonies as much as in all riches.”

For the ways of morality—let weary moralists say what they will—are not strewn with ‘pains and penalties,’ any more than with ‘primroses.’ Duty, in the actual doing of it, is a joy and a privilege: the *approach* to it is often hard. There is happiness at the heart and sweetness at the core of right action; and the self-renunciation which Carlyle commends, and which is too often taken to be the substance of duty, is but a shadow thrown by the positive process of attaining the better self—the pains of child-birth which are forgotten in a greater joy. Man’s life lies precisely where the finite and infinite intersect. The process of the moral

¹ *Sartor Resartus*, “The Everlasting Yea.”

life is a process of incarnation: ideal aims appearing amongst and clothing themselves with the flesh of circumstance. 'Rest,' in the sense of confining or stopping this process, is not life, but death. Everything that lives, even the plant and animal, is always either growing or decaying, changing every moment in every part of its structure. And man is always becoming either morally worse or morally better; for every deed reacts upon the agent, and he is the creature as well as the creator of his actions. They pass back into him and become habits and propensities.

His choice lies between these two ways of seeking satisfaction—between a good which is, and a seeming good which is not, in harmony with his nature: and not between these and a condition of fixity which he is so apt to clothe with a fictitious value and to call 'Rest.' But there is the widest difference between moving from illusion to illusion, and moving from a lesser to a greater and truer reality; between being driven to effort by failure and disappointment, as one who treads, and in treading sinks deeper, in a bottomless morass, and being inspired to effort by achievement, and ascending from good to better on a mount which is the mount of enlarging vision all the way. It is time that our moralists should cease their mourning over the nature of the moral good. Its pursuit is not a tragedy. It is not always escaping those that seek it. They find it, and it grows in their grasp. The process of learning goodness is like that of learning the truth—a toilsome happiness and growing gain. Every good act done, like every truth reached, breaks out into opposites which are aspects of a better good and a fuller truth. But that is not a defect; it is a divine quality, and an inexhaustible beneficence. Man's best destiny is thus to heighten rather than to lower his claims, counting himself the rightful heir to an inherit-

ance which has unconditioned worth and is in itself sufficient and complete. For such, as we have seen, is the moral good.

We have now to ask whether or how far the Political State fulfils those conditions which are essential to a life

The State as a moral institution. that can be called moral ; or, in a word, whether the State has the determining characters of a moral being. Is it capable, as Aristotle thought, and is it bound by its very nature to pursue in its actions a good that is absolute ? Upon the answer that can be given to this question depends the nature and the extent of the claim which it can make upon its citizens, and the meaning and value of their life as members of the State.

It is evident that to answer the question in the affirmative is to set a very high value upon the State. It is to attribute to it a worth that is unconditioned and to make it an object of unlimited reverence, as we have seen ; and it would seem that such a view exaggerates to an irrational and unpractical extent both the worth and the obligations of Patriotism. An excessive patriotism, it is believed, is one of the most prolific causes of war and of its ruthless excesses. For the citizens to make their State the object of unlimited devotion as an end in itself seems to bring two intolerable consequences : it involves the complete subordination of their own lives to it, so as to justify its unlimited interference even with their inner or private aspect, and, in a word, to enslave them ; and, in the second place, it carries with it the inevitable antagonism of every State to every other State.

In the next place, it is no less evident that we cannot attribute a moral character to the State except on the assumption that it is a Person. The meaning of ' personality ' is not easily defined, for it varies. It is, as has been remarked, at once the least and the greatest thing we can say of any one that he is ' a person.' He cannot be less and

he cannot be more. But one thing 'a person' must have : it must have an individuality of its own, a private, and in a sense exclusive, self ; and it must be to some extent conscious of it. It must have an 'ego' as we say, and in all that it knows and does it must be its own centre—'feel' itself. But how can the State be a person ? it is asked. Where or in whom does its personality reside ? Is its individuality ever focussed ? Is it conscious of carrying with it, and of being a distinct 'ego' in its relations with its citizens ; or are not all its actions simply due to the relation of its citizens to one another ? Surely the State can be nothing apart from its citizens, except an empty name ; and when we speak of its rights over its citizens, or of their duties to it we speak elliptically, meaning their rights over and duties to *one another*, in virtue of their common membership. It is the medium of their rights and duties : a human institution, it is true. For the relations that constitute it are the relations of will to will, or of man to man ; but it is nothing more than an institution and a mere product of men's activities. "We look upon the State," says Mr. A. C. Bradley, "as a contrivance for securing (to the individual citizen) the enjoyment of his liberty and the opportunity of pursuing his ends, a contrivance which involves some limitation of his rights, and ought to involve as little as possible. Even when reflection has shown us that there is something theoretically wrong with these ideas, we remain convinced that a happiness or a morality which is imposed upon us from without loses half its value, and that there are spheres of our life and parts of our inward experience into which no one ought to intrude. And if we feel strongly our unity with others, and are willing to admit that social and political institutions have a positive object and not the merely negative one of protection, we emphasize the fact

that the character or happiness they are to promote are those of individuals." (*Hellenica*, p. 189.)

It is not to be denied, on the other hand, that not only the language we employ when we speak of the State but our practical attitude towards it, which is a much more significant and serious matter, is quite inconsistent with the view that the State is 'a contrivance,' or mere instrument and means of purposes which it cannot itself formulate. We speak of its *rights* over its citizens and we discuss their limits; but no one denies them. We speak of its *duties* to its citizens, and we condemn or approve it according as we consider that it neglects or fulfils them. We bring its actions under moral criteria, and we call it just or unjust as it succeeds or fails to correspond to them. We consider that it is capable of moral growth or decay, and that its moral qualities, even more than its external circumstances, determine its destiny for good or ill. Is all this nothing but the language of metaphor? Is it for a metaphor that our soldiers are dying on the battle-fields, and their mourning parents are spending the elixir of their lives? Surely, unless we confine the meaning of the State, as is often done for technical purposes, so as to make it signify nothing more than the Government, representing it as something distinct from the social whole in which we live and move and have our being and which we call 'our country,' we must admit that, in regard to it, in the degree in which we are good citizens, we experience the same moral relations as those which bind us to one another.

That the State is a means for the defence and security of individual rights; that it does nothing and can be nothing *apart* from its individual citizens; that it is beyond all comparison the most significant and potent instrument of their well-being, it is not possible to deny. But does it

follow that this truth is the whole truth ? If it is an organ and a secular organ for the use of individuals, are not its legislators, judges, soldiers, nay every common citizen at his station and amidst his duties, *its* organs ? Whose will do the legislators declare when they convert a parliamentary Bill into an Act ? Hardly their own, and hardly that of a mere aggregate of individuals. It is 'our country' as a whole, as a more or less harmonious unit and individuality which says 'I *will*' when Parliament, as its organ, enacts that no child within the four seas shall be starved or neglected or be left untaught. The judge, in like manner, applies his country's laws, and by no means his own ; and it is in its service that the dreadful deeds of the soldier may acquire the nobility that comes from the service of a sacred cause.

If we take a complete survey of both sides of the situation, and give due weight to what at least seems to be the fact, that the State is a 'contrivance,' an 'organ,' or a means of its citizens, and also that its citizens are its organs and means, a new question arises. Can both views be true ? Is a State a good State, and a citizen a good citizen precisely in the degree to which they are for one another *both* means and ends ? Kant regards man as "a member of the kingdom of ends," and therefore both 'sovereign and subject,' and most truly sovereign when his service is most devoted and self-forgetful—'counting all things but loss for the excellency' of the moral good. The solution of the problem of the nature of the State lies, I believe, in this direction ; that is to say, in the clearer recognition that it is a moral agent, and that its service, in consequence, is the way of the better life for its citizens.

In order to find whether it is the true solution we must examine the Structure of the State : the task of our next chapter.

CHAPTER III

THE STRUCTURE OF THE STATE: THE PROBLEM OF INDIVIDUALITY

OUR survey of the attitude of the plain man and the good citizen towards his country showed unmistakeably that it was full of inconsistencies. At one time he thinks of himself as the servant of the State, and desires nothing better than, either by his life or if need be by his death, to be able to contribute to its good. The well-being of their country is the passion of some of the best men we know, and in comparison with its safety all else is but as dust in the balance. There are causes much greater than our own lives, and our country's cause is one of them, as we see to-day very clearly in the lurid light of the war. And there are not a few men, and those amongst the most far-seeing, who would not hesitate to say, that the salvation of both the State and its citizens would be much more secure and complete if there were clearer evidence that the same passion for their country's good possessed the souls of the people in times of peace. But, at another time, the same men, not without good reasons, take what seems to be the opposite view. Instead of being the aim and object of the unselfish devotion of its citizens the State is regarded as existing merely for their sake, and as having neither meaning nor

purpose nor value, nor any title to respect, except as a serviceable instrument of their good.

The natural conclusion which seems to follow from such a contradiction is that one or other of these views is false ; and when we attempt to decide which of them must be adopted, we are on the whole more ready to conclude that the State is means to the citizen, than that the citizen is means for the State. We are unwilling, as the current phrase goes, to be treated as its ' fodder ' ; and we explain the patriot's devotion to it as, in truth, his devotion to the individuals who compose it. The State ' in itself,' we say (quite truly), is nothing. But we do not realize that the individual ' in himself ' may also be nothing, and that to think to any purpose of either, we must dismiss these abstractions, and endeavour to understand the State and the individual as we find them, not as they might be when severed and held asunder. And the State as we find it is somehow a more or less complete whole, uniting more or less harmoniously, and very greatly enriching, the lives of its members.

But, even then, we hesitate to regard it as an end in itself, and subject to no laws except those which emanate from its own nature and which it imposes upon itself. To do so, apparently, were to fall into the error of those who, as we have seen, deny the moral character of the State. Patriotism, however moral the State which is the object of its devotion, would seem to have the same exclusive character, and enslave the citizen in the same unqualified way. It would lead in the same way to the conflict of every State with every other State—the *bellum omnium contra omnes*, the ' State of nature,' which Hobbes described, where there is only one law, namely, that of the strongest, and only one activity, namely, ' the struggle for existence.'

If there is any difference it would appear to be in favour of the unlimited and unscrupulous egotism of the State which claims that its rights extend as far as its might to enforce them; and which, at least, is not hypocritical and does not endow itself with the absolutely unconditional authority which is the characteristic of morality. Surely, it is argued, there is a wider and more generous and more noble service than that of the State, namely, that of humanity; and a good man is something more and better than a good citizen. There are circumstances in which his duty may be to resist the claims of his own country and refuse obedience to its laws, and even to endeavour to overturn it.

The qualification, then, that our sovereign State is moral does not seem to improve matters, for its sovereignty is still absolute; and the service of such a State seems still to enslave, for its citizens are still means.

What answer shall we make? We shall find a clue to it by distinguishing between two meanings of 'liberty' **The answer:** which are often confused: one of them the (a) **Freedom.** lowest, and an object of disapproval whether in men or States, namely, the liberty that recognizes no law and is best called 'licence'; and the other the highest, which recognizes and adopts a law that is absolute and universal, and by its adoption of it converts it into the law of its own life, and its rigour into 'a delight.' "I will walk at liberty" or "at large," "for I seek thy precepts." "Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage."¹ This latter is a liberty that breaks into dithyrambs, it is so full and free and joyous. And it is this liberty which the good citizen desires for himself and respects in others, and for the sake of which States, rising

¹ Ps. cxix. 45, 54.

at last to the dignity of their own nature as moral, have armed themselves with the weapons of destruction and staked their existence. There is a distance wide as the poles of the moral universe between these two 'Sovereignities.' One isolates, the other unites; one destroys, destroys even itself, the other builds, and builds on everlasting foundations, the most wonderful structure that the heart of man can conceive. One impoverishes, reducing the might of men and States into nothingness, the other enriches, and has 'the nature of things' as its inheritance; for it makes both the world of nature and that of man partners in its enterprise.

There is a similar ambiguity in the conception of 'Personality' or individuality, which is attributed to the State by all who claim for it any kind of sovereignty, or speak of its 'rights,' whether over its citizens or against other States. We have said that 'personality' is an object of respect, whether we speak of the personality of an individual or of a State. But that respect or reverence may be based on two opposite views of 'Personality' or the self; namely, either on its privacy and exclusiveness, or upon its comprehensiveness. For the self or a 'person' has both of these characters. "Each self," we are told, "is a unique existence, which is perfectly *impervious* to other selves—impervious in a fashion of which the impenetrability of matter is a faint analogue. The self, accordingly, resists invasion; in its character of self it refuses to admit another self within itself, and thus be made, as it were, a mere retainer of something else. . . . The very principle of a self is this exclusiveness. . . . The self is in truth the very apex of separation and differentiation. . . . It is, in existence, or metaphysically, a principle of isolation. . . . I have a centre of my own—a will of my

own—which no one shares with me or can share—a centre which I maintain even in my dealings with God Himself. . . . Religion is the self-surrender of the human will to the divine. ‘Our wills are ours to make them Thine.’ But this is a *self-surrender*, a surrender which only self, only will, can make.”¹

Privacy and exclusiveness are evident characteristics of personality. Philosophers have given the most different accounts of the self and its relation to its contents, but, so far as I know, the existence of these features has never been denied. David Hume denied its permanent identity; or, at least, insisted that he could discover nothing by looking within except the changing phenomena of consciousness, of which the self was but a ‘bundle.’ But to deny to personality the *sense* of existing—the self-reference, or self-feeling, or self-awareness; to reduce it into a looker-on at what takes place within, while it is not conscious that it is looking-on, is to dissipate it. Feelings, ideas, volitions in that case would be scattered and belong to no one, and mean nothing to any one. There must be some centre or focus, however certain it is that a centre which refers to no circumference, and a focus in which are gathered no rays or relations are meaningless words. That spontaneity, freedom, responsibility, and, in short, all the conditions of a moral life would disappear just as completely as those of the intelligence is also evident. Our volitions, actions, duties are exclusively ‘our own.’ “We are persons because we have an excluding personality.” Whatever forces, whether of the physical or of the human world, play around it and beat upon it, like the waves of the ocean on a rock-bound coast, the ‘self’ is still a sacred realm whose very existence depends upon its security against intrusion.

¹Pringle-Pattison’s *Hegelianism and Personality*, pp. 216-18.

"Yes! in the sea of life enisled,
With echoing straits between us thrown,
Dotting the shoreless watery wild,
We mortal millions live *alone*.

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A God, a God, their severance ruled!
And bade betwixt their shores to be
The unplumb'd, salt, estranging sea."

It is on a view somewhat like this that Kant denied that the self can be an *object* of knowledge. No one can hold his self before himself, and know it or act upon it; for, he thought, the self we know is not the self that knows. "If we could do so, the 'I' would cease to be an 'I' and become a 'not-I.' Or, as he puts it, the 'I' is not something of which we have 'a standing and abiding impression,' a steady clear image. It is always a subject, always active, and never to be conceived as a passive object, or permanent substance."¹ Trusting to this severance and isolation, Kant lifted the real self out of the context of the vast natural scheme, and made it immune from all its influences. It stands above the universe and is in no sense 'an object amongst objects.' It is *free*. Its thoughts and actions are not an echo from without, nor any kind of response or recoil. They flow outwards from its own spontaneity; and it can neither decline nor divide the risk, or the privilege or the responsibility of being the free creator of its own experience. A man's inner life is and ought to be exclusively his own: in this respect, that of the most abject slave is beyond the reach of the most ruthless and uncompromising tyranny. His feelings, his volitions, his very submission belong only to him. For the same reason, no 'temptation,' however strong, can bear

¹ *Lectures and Essays*, by Professor William Wallace, p. 283.

the burden of our bad deeds. The self that does wrong 'surrenders.' It is a fortress which cannot be taken except by the collusion of a traitor within. He who says 'It is not I who did it, but my passions,' cannot rid himself of the implications of the word '*my*'; and the first step towards a better life is the recognition that, let the passions within and the circumstances without be what they may, a man's deeds are not theirs but his own, and his own only. His will, every will, is a sovereign will, incapable of abdicating the least of its rights and its powers.

Without committing ourselves to all the grounds on which philosophers have based this sovereignty, it still remains that its actual existence must be acknowledged, and is, in fact, consciously or unconsciously admitted by men in all their dealings with one another. But everything depends on the nature of the sovereignty claimed or attributed. And, surely, sovereignty that depends on mere exclusiveness is powerless. An absolutely isolated sovereign would rule over emptiness. His dignity, rights, and powers would disappear with his subjects, and he himself would sink into vacant nothingness. It was no marvel that David Hume could not find an '*ego*' which stood *apart* from all ideas and desires and volitions: no one can see emptiness. If a person '*excludes*,' he cannot isolate; even when he holds the world of men and things at arm's length his intercourse with it remains. His action, after all, is interaction. He cannot know if there be no objects to know, and he cannot act except upon them and by means of them. To be free in *vacuo* is to be impotent. This also is evident and significant, however difficult it may be to reconcile it with the opposite and apparently contrary truth.

We admit, then, that "the self is the most exclusive

and *impervious* of all that which we know—impervious in a fashion of which the impenetrability of matter is a faint analogue”; but, we add, it is also *potentially the most comprehensive*. It is always the centre, the owner, the user of a world; and he is the most fully and truly a person whose world is widest and richest. The little man is he whose knowledge is shallow, whose motives are mean, whose purposes are few and meagre, whose interests are narrow. He approaches extinction in the degree in which he is shut up within himself. Selfishness is littleness; caprice is feebleness. Man is measured by his ‘world.’ If the light of his intelligence is low, it is because the material which his intelligence has kindled is scanty; if his purposes are narrow and his actions have little range or power, it is because he has borrowed little from the powers which environ him. On the other hand, as the knowledge of the plain man extends, and is transformed from the accidental coherence of opinion with opinion into a systematic whole, secure in virtue of the equipoise of its elements, he himself grows. His ‘ego’ means more. It is the centre, the focus, the life of a wider world. And the same is true of him as a being who wills and acts. The man of science has the forces of the physical world at his service, and the good man, in the measure of his goodness, is inspired and sustained by the powers which ‘keep the stars from wrong.’ He has “overcome the world,” and “is more than conqueror”; and his victory is the world’s best destiny. The self, we are told, “is what it includes. It is only finite, imperfect, self-contradictory, exclusive, through the impotence which causes it to include so little. On the other hand, its true nature lies outside it, in the whole, to its dependence on which the defects of its impotence bear witness.”¹

¹ Bosanquet, *The Principle of Individuality and Value*, p. 325.

Now, this dual nature of individuality has the most important bearing upon the interpretation of the State, Application and of Citizenship within the State. In the of these principles first place it disposes of the question, if question to the State. it can seriously be called, whether Sovereignty, Liberty, the right and the power to act, Responsibility for its actions, and their rightness or wrongness, wisdom or folly, can or can not be attributed to the State. True as it is that the State cannot act at all except through its members, any more than a tree can grow except by means of its roots and trunk and leaves, their actions are still its actions. We think of it as a whole, a unit, as having functions and as exercising them either well or ill : and if we deny these attributes to the State nothing remains of it.

It is not quite so obvious, on the other hand, that the question of the limits, fixed and external, of its Sovereignty, Liberty, Rights and Power is not less unmeaning. On the contrary, the problem of the limit of the State's rights has long engaged both theoretical and practical statesmen, and no doubt will continue to do so. There can be nothing more repugnant to a democratic people than to claim unlimited sovereignty for the State ; or to hold that its rights can and should be limited only by its power. Such a claim, apparently, would at one stroke reduce the citizens into slaves, and leave in the world One Slave-State. This is the fatal error of which we hold Germany to be guilty.

Yet it is in no spirit of paradox that I would maintain that a discussion conducted on this basis can bring no results. I believe, indeed, that a Limited Sovereignty is a contradiction both in terms and in fact. An unlimited sovereignty, in the sense in which it is repellent to democracy, is assumed to imply lawlessness, caprice, the right of the State to will and to do anything it pleases, and its liability to be pleased

anyhow. But I wish to maintain that such a sovereignty is meaningless; for Lawlessness is impotence; and pure caprice is action without motive or grounds, which is not more possible than is a consequence following upon no cause. A sovereign State or a free individual must act from motives, and find these motives within its self. But everything depends upon the character of that self. So far as I can see, a good and wise State cannot have too much liberty or power or sovereignty, nor an evil and foolish one too little. The former would respect and foster the freedom of its citizens and the rights of its rivals, and find that its own well-being involves their well-being and makes it at once their lord and servant. There is not and there cannot be any other true sovereignty or liberty. "At every step, the rational being is legislating at once for himself and for all others, and his freedom belongs to him just on condition that he does so legislate. In this sense '*Nur das Gesetz kann uns die Freiheit geben.*'" ¹ The freedom of isolation is impotence, and the liberty of caprice is bondage under the hardest of all masters, namely, chance.

At the root of the error which would limit sovereignty is the conception that 'law' must be an external authority, and that sovereignty and liberty consist in escaping from its trammels. It is assumed that the State which is sovereign and the man who is free must find the springs of their action within themselves alone, which is quite true; but it is also assumed that their self must be aloof, detached, out of the range of all interference from 'without,' which is quite false. States and individuals, it is said, must exclude what is alien, must defend their privacy: their personality must suffer no intrusion—which is again true. But it is only a half truth; for, at the best, exclusion is only one aspect of freedom.

¹ Caird's *Philosophy of Kant*, vol. ii. p. 320.

Exclusion is justifiable only against what is alien ; but there is nothing alien except that which is made alien by our own limitations. Limits without have their origin and significance in the limits within. Understand the world of things and men, be true to yourself, and the world is at your feet. The sovereignty of States, like the liberty of individuals, depends, not upon their privacy but upon their comprehension ; not upon being free *from* the world, but upon finding the world to be bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh.

The cardinal importance of these truths justifies the attempt to make them abundantly clear.

First, then, States, citizens, nay everything that lives, must exclude what is alien ; but they must not stop short at exclusion. The living tree must not merely keep out the rain and wind, like a closed and shuttered house, so that it is not wet within or filled with air currents ; but it must seize upon and transmute these elements into its own substance, make them parts of its own structure infused with its own life. The State and the individual must do the same. The entrance of a brute force it must resist ; but its sovereignty and liberty are not established until it has brought that force into its service. Personality must draw a ring around itself ; it is always self-determining, as we say ; but the ring it draws is not an empty ring. Outer objects for mind become *its* contents when they are known, find a place as elements of its experience, and enter into its structure. Every act of knowing modifies both the knower and, in some sense, even the known. It emancipates what is latent in them, turns their possibilities into actualities. If I have heard and appreciated a great piece of music, I have ' gone out of myself,' as we say : more truly, I have exercised and

educated my taste for music and enlarged my capacity. At the same time I have taken up the silent waves of sound of which the physicist speaks and converted them into the splendour of musical harmony, liberating in them also a meaning and value which of themselves, and apart from the apparatus of sense and soul, they could not have. Where there are not ears to hear, there can be no music. Man grows and attains himself, and the wealth of his world expands *pari passu*: they are two sides of the same process.

The same law holds as to the relation of man to man, and of State to State. 'Exclusion' or 'privacy' is a miserable half-truth, and gives to them no claim to respect nor any right or power. It is as a power to go out of itself in knowing and willing, and to escape from its isolation that we would safeguard the individuality of the State. When the Allies took up arms for Belgium their object was not merely to screen it from intrusion: that were only a negative condition of its good, and a mere preliminary, worthless in itself. They desired to see it enter into communion with other States, an equal amongst equals, possessing and enjoying the right to make use of the world's resources and to develop its powers in doing so. The Sovereignty of a State is its authority over its world through being *in* the world; and in the world, not as a stranger, but at home amongst friendly powers. Liberty is a power to conquer the utilities of the world, not to withdraw from it; and the conquest is complete when the world is found to be a fellow-worker.

But to enter into and possess or to rule the world is in the first instance to submit to it. Sovereignty and Liberty result from the discovery of our affinity with the world of men and things; not in subjecting it to our mere pleasure.

They grow and prosper as the intimacy deepens, and culminate when the laws of what is real beat as a pulse in our spirits. Both man's thoughts and man's actions illustrate this truth; for his power is greatest when his conceptions are the working in him of what is real, and when his purposes are its tendencies. He stoops to conquer, and his conquest is at the same time a complete surrender. He becomes the medium through which the Universe declares its meaning and exercises its beneficence, and in the degree in which he becomes the medium he attains his royalty.

Let us observe this process, first on the side of knowledge. Knowledge manifestly begins in submission. We do not dictate to facts, they are stubborn "chiefs that winna ding." We lay aside our prejudices so far as we can, and we examine our presuppositions: philosophy is little else, and has never been better defined than as "The process of reconstructing experience." The method of philosophy is the same as that which science follows within its specific domain, and which consists in listening intently to what facts say. If we are to use the categories of ruler and ruled, or judge and appellant, we must place the authority not in man's mind but in the objects it strives to know. The scientific man subjects his hypothesis to the test of facts. His experiments are his means of setting questions; having set them he waits for the answer. His 'anticipations' of nature are conjectures on which he will not rely till they are countersigned; and whether his hypotheses are true or not depends on whether they 'work' or not. The 'pragmatic' philosopher is right so far; he says what is obvious. He is wrong in forgetting what is equally obvious, namely, that in the end man must use his intellect to judge whether the theory works or not.

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The appeal is not from the intelligence to facts, but from facts partly known to facts more fully known by the intelligence. Singly and separate, both the intelligence and the facts are impotent, and there is neither truth nor error. Truth and error are both joint products resulting from the interaction of subject and object. Even the hypothesis is not, as our usual language implies, first made by the mind acting solely and then brought to facts not yet known at all. If we examine our wildest fancies, or the most daring creations of an unbridled imagination, we shall find that every element in the content, however confused and commingled, has been borrowed. Our 'other worlds,' be they never so fair or foul, are built from the materials of an earthly experience. Man's mind is not creative, and has invented of itself no simplest idea, nor any connexions or relations between ideas. Hence we do not first frame conceptions and then bring them to facts : facts have been at the making of them. There are not two worlds, one a world of thoughts and another a world of realities, standing over against one another. There are no thoughts except so long as the process of thinking goes on ; and that thinking, whether competent or incompetent, is a joint process, in which the world takes man by the hand. In fact, thoughts are not static products but processes, and the processes are the interaction of two aspects of reality which we can distinguish and cannot separate.

The same intense intimacy, the same fundamental correlation characterizes man's *practical* relation to the world in which he lives. If his volitions, like ^{and of} his thoughts, are his own, if he is free and re- ^{morality.} sponsible for his actions, it is not because he has willed or acted in isolated loneliness. Whether he keeps his feet in walking, or stumbles and falls, he is not free of the grip

of the law of gravitation, and he can do neither except by its help. In the same way, whether he respects or violates the laws of morality he does not escape from their domain, and cannot act except by reference to them. He cannot will a deed, as a voluntary agent, except with a view to attain what he desires; and he cannot desire evil as evil, however often he desires what proves to be an evil on better acquaintance. The law of his moral world holds him in its arms, however tragic his misinterpretation of its nature and of his own good. If there be any region 'above' or below morality he cannot enter into it as long as he is a man.

We speak of the moral world as independent of all the chances and changes of man's life and of the natural universe. "All the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll; and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig-tree."¹ But "one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."² This is not merely the poetry of moral passion, it is a necessary conclusion that follows from the nature of the moral good; and it is implicit in every distinction we draw between right and wrong. For the moral good, as we have already seen, must be supreme and unconditioned and absolute: its justification and necessity and authority lie wholly in itself. There is no ulterior 'why,' no anterior cause or explanation of the moral good. To ask 'Why should I be moral?' is to ask an unanswerable question. It is like asking for a proof that twice two is fifteen; a problem which baffles the mathematician, not because his intelligence is weak, but because the terms of the

¹ Isaiah xxxiv. 4.

² Matt. v. 18.

problem are self-contradictory, for the unit has no fixed value. The problem is insoluble because it is unreasonable. In a similar way the demand to justify morality, or to say "*why* I should be moral" is unreasonable. The moral good which must be an end in itself and be desired for its own sake is assumed to be a means of, and to be desired on account of, something else. The metaphysician, I believe, could show us, further, that the conception of 'the good' is not only the supreme law and ultimate necessity of the action of rational beings, but the ultimate condition of the natural cosmos, the principle of order in the universe and of the reason, which seeks that order and implies it even when it denies it.

There never was, in the whole history of statecraft, more foolish talk, or a more self-stultifying purpose than that which would place the State above, or liberate it from the obligations of morality—unless it be that of staking its authority and dignity on that claim. It is to found its sovereignty on unreason, and to condemn it to a lower plane of existence than if it perverted morality and sought evil as its good. For there is no personal dignity or worth which does not flow from the supreme good. It is the source of every right and the only ultimate justification of any claim. On the other hand, given the moral conditions of the claims of a State, then there are no limits to its rights—a truth often forgotten by those who consider that the sovereignty of the State must be limited, not only by its imperfections but by its very nature. Neither State nor individual, nor 'humanity' (whose good is taken to be higher as well as wider, and whose rights are held to be supreme), has any authority or right '*in itself*,' so long as its 'self' is regarded as something merely separate from other selves and its individuality as exclusive. The

use of exclusive categories in moral discussion is wrong and leads to nothing better than confusion. The true good of the State is at the same time the true good of humanity and of the individual. Every moral good is a common good ; and every duty done, however limited its range, is a realization and a further articulation of the moral good. The principle of the moral universe is present in the humblest good act, and beats as a pulse in the veins of the agent ; for it is like life in a living organism, present everywhere and located nowhere. The station which the good man fills may be small and his duties may have a narrow range—his contribution to the world's good may be 'a widow's mite.' But if the duty is well done and done as a duty, the sovereign value of the supreme good dwells in it. The good man at his post knows that he has the Moral Universe at his back, and the consciousness of it gives him a strength which cannot be overcome. There is a pride and a dignity and a sense of a full peace at the heart of many a suffering soldier as he wields the weapons of destruction and slays his brother-man ; it comes from the fact that the deeds he hates are done not merely for his country, not merely for humanity : he stands, with 'quietness in his thought,' for 'the Stern Lawgiver' which preserves the stars from wrong. He stands for the good.

Outside of their relation to the moral universe, were that possible, the actions of men and States, and the individuality from which their actions spring, have as little value as an object out of relation to the world has meaning or substance. We speak of objects as standing *in* relation to other objects : the thing itself seems to be at the centre and its relations to cluster around it. We speak in the same way of truths : they seem to stand apart to begin with, and then to be

associated under more or less necessary principles. Some of them we call axiomatic, in the sense of being true in their own exclusive light; and philosophers, carrying the plain man with them as usual, have looked for single, undeniable, ultimate truths which shall serve as a foundation to their edifice of knowledge. The same error is committed in all these instances: it is that of seeking what is real and true and good in privacy and exclusiveness. The same error, as I shall show, often vitiates our citizenship, both in the practice and in the theory of it. It is that of ignoring the truth that individuality is to be measured by its comprehensiveness.

It will be a part of our problem to enquire more fully in what ways the State and its citizens interpenetrate, and borrow both substance and significance from one another. Our present task is that of making clear that their individuality is possible only in virtue of that interpenetration. Let us turn for a moment to another aspect of this fact.

We have spoken of the permanency of the moral order, and how it seems to stand apart in eternal dignity from all the contingencies of man's history. We have now to acknowledge a truth which appears ^{Its dependence on human will.} to be its direct opposite. The moral world exists only *in* being willed: it is *altogether* dependent, so far as man is concerned, upon his willing it. Let him cease to will what is morally good and it ceases to exist in his world. Truths not known by any one vanish; virtues not in operation die. The moral world must be sustained in being by obedience to its laws. It is like personal character, and must be forever building if it is built at all. Static conceptions once more mislead. It is a prolific error to hypostatize the moral world, in the sense of giving it an existence *apart* from the imperfect forms of social order

within which men live their ordinary life. The ideal world is not a world aloof from the real, standing above it as a fixed model and standard of perfection. In the first place, morality is not fixed, any more than truth is fixed. It is, I repeat, a *process*. And, in the second place, so far from standing in contrast with the real, untainted by its touch, it is just the highest possibilities that dwell in the real and these in operation. Moral principles are not facts 'in the air' independent of circumstances, any more than they are 'the creatures' of circumstance. Pliable principles are just objects of our distrust: it is not so generally known that principles which cannot be applied to circumstances, but are 'too high and good for the hard, practical world,' are not estimable. They are as valueless as hypotheses which do not fit the facts. They are *not* moral, any more than such hypotheses are true. They are figments. The good man finds his duty always at his hand: its voice is just the call of the circumstances in which he is placed; it is the demand made upon him by his outward station and by his inner capacity for service. Morality is not knight-errantry, and it does not need to wander in search of heroic tasks. Its duties are urgent and imperative; they are the necessities of the situation crying upon character and awakening respondent necessities within. Duty is never done *de haut en bas*, and it carries with it no touch of the spirit of condescension. The good man, who helps to save the world, sits at the feast with the publicans and sinners. He helps the world at the level on which he finds it, and he finds in its needs his fulcrum for raising it.

Not to recognize this truth is the cardinal error of pacifism. That doctrine deals in *fixed* moral values, as if the permanence of moral principles and the eternal authority and

dignity of moral commands were the permanence of changelessness and the dignity of the dead. Human life, one's own or another's, has no fixed worth. No *particular* fact, be it a man or a State, or any other object we can name, has absolute value in itself. The 'sovereignty' of natural life is as little absolute as that of the State—pacifist and German theorist commit the same blunder. Value comes from relation to the whole, as both religion and philosophy teach; just as the truth of a particular statement arises from its context and is due to the system in which it stands as a necessary item. Except as a servant of the good neither man nor State has a right to live. It were better for him who offends "that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." Values are relative. In an imperfect world they come into collision, and it behoves the good and wise man to discover which is primary, and which is secondary and must be postponed as the lesser good: because, as in conflict with the higher, it is *not* good but evil. The good soldier in a good cause when he slays his fellow-man is not slaying *his* enemy. He is destroying a human being who, however blindly and however unwittingly and however led by laudable loyalties, is an implement in the hands of a power at war with the right. His duty to the enemy changes the moment the enemy yields, or ceases to be such an instrument: then gentleness binds the wounds and strives to save the life which the moment before it was a duty to take.

The *same* principles issue in outward acts that differ from each other to the very verge of contradiction. We see this, not only on the battlefield but in the common ways of our common life. Love on the hearth of a good family

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takes an endless variety of ways to express itself—according to the call of the moment: it grants and it refuses, it checks and it reproves, it encourages and it praises; it commands and it obeys, frowns and smiles, rewards and punishes; it clothes the child in the morning and takes off its clothes at night; sends the

“whining schoolboy, with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school,”

and welcomes him home again at night with radiant happiness.

And it is not only the outward expression of moral principles which varies at the call of circumstance, the principles themselves change with their application. They acquire meaning and depth and range and authority. Once more we find an illustration of this truth in the domain of knowledge: for, in the last resort, theory and practice spring from the same root, are branches of the same tree and feed one another. Every scientific man knows how his hypotheses, in so far as they are true, gain significance with every application to a new kind of fact; and they come to mean indefinitely more to him than they do to the plain man. The law that accounts to the plain man for the fall of the stone or the weight of the burden on his back, binds the stars and keeps the physical elements of the wide universe in equipoise for the man of science. In the same manner, moral principles extend their sway, and become at once more universal and more fully articulated. Righteousness extends its dominion over all the world and gains in vigour, and it becomes more considerate and gentle at every step. The love that loosely binds the cave man to his temporary wife, or the lake-dwelling mother to her children, ignorant

and intermittent and gross as it is, is still human love, and has possibilities within it that are beyond the reach of the brute. Give love time, and apply it to the fleeting needs of the passing circumstance, and it will shed its grossness, and its flickering inconstancy will become a steady loyalty. It will issue in the sacred and constant relations which unite the family with bonds stronger than death, and make it the fairest thing in this world of ours, and the fittest emblem of 'the kingdom of heaven.' And not even yet do we know all the power which dwells in love. It has to be further applied to circumstance and rise thereby in greater power and splendour. Imagination cannot picture the power of love, and reason cannot anticipate its beneficence, till it has overcome and supplanted the rivalry of class with class—*abolishing* them all alike within the State, and made all States competitors in mutual service. As little as the cave man could forecast the features of the present world can the present world forecast the world that is to be, when the sway of love has attained its fulness.

The moral order, then, is the natural order at its best. The ideal is the truth of the real. The real has not realized itself until it is the incarnation of the ideal; The relation for until that time its possibilities are *only* of the moral and natural possibilities, latent forces indwelling but imprisoned, straining towards light and liberty. Few utterances of a great thinker have awakened such a storm of disapproval as the saying of Hegel :

*“ Was vernünftig ist, das ist wirklich ;
Und was wirklich ist, das ist vernünftig.”*

Great truths are dangerous instruments in the hands of the foolish. Hegel was supposed to justify the world as it

stands, and, at one stroke, to cut the root of the will-to-good, stultifying the very need and impulse towards better ways of life, and destroying morality. But his critics were forgetting the possibilities in the world as it is, without which no improvement is possible : Hegel found in these possibilities a power that was greater and a reality that was deeper than the imperfections which hindered their expression and resisted their authority. If the ideal is *not* present and is not more real than aught else in the actual state of the world morality is not possible ; not one step towards goodness can be taken. Man has to *become* himself. ‘ The kingdom of heaven ’ has to arrive ; but it can arrive only because it is already the real at the heart of the actual, even as the life that will reveal itself in the full-grown oak is the reality and the power at the core of the acorn. The ideal that is *only* ideal is empty ; and the real that is not disturbed by an ideal which is its own and its inmost secret and substance, is inert, with the inertness and helplessness of death. Ideal and real cannot be held apart. They are related to one another as the life of the living is to its outward structure.

It is, I believe, true that this real-ideal world, the world we know as moving slowly and painfully towards the attainment of its better and truer self, has revealed itself most fully, so far, in the political State, tragic as the imperfections are of the best State we have ever heard of or can conceive. But, it will be asked, have we not betrayed the very principle of morality, whether for States or individuals, by implicating its principles and laws in natural circumstances ? A few pages back we were insisting on the independence of the moral laws of the whole natural scheme : now it would seem that except

The contradiction of the supremacy and the dependence of the moral world.

in relation to circumstance they are empty and impotent. Is not this a contradiction? Undoubtedly, I should answer: it is an insoluble contradiction if we start from a dualistic assumption, and regard the natural and the spiritual as mutually exclusive regions, each under its own laws. But that assumption must be examined. Man is a moral being, subject to moral laws, incapable of escaping their obligations however great his crimes. And no one will deny that he is a physical organism, subject to the laws of the natural world. Nor is he a dweller in the two worlds alternately. He lives at the point of their intersection. Every word he speaks or hears, every conception that he forms, and every volition which breaks out into a deed carries strains from both. Moreover, as a separate self he is helpless. He needs for every thought and deed both schemes as his coadjutors. He cannot be judged *apart* from his circumstances; for he means nothing when severed from them. The isolated self is helpless. We have been told that the self "is what it includes," and even that "its true nature lies outside it." "Mind has nothing of its own, but the active form of totality: everything positive it draws from nature."¹ It is but a 'focus.' "We, our subjective selves, are in truth much more to be compared to a rising and falling tide, which is continually covering wider areas as it deepens, and dropping back to narrower and shallower ones as it ebbs, than to the isolated pillars with their fixed circumferences, as which we have been taught to think of ourselves."² "We seem to be unable to shake off the superstition which regards [finite minds] as substances, crystal nuclei, fallen or celestial angels, or both at once."³ "The best description of the nature of

¹ Bosanquet, *The Principle of Individuality and Value*, p. 367.

² *Ibid.* p. 373.

³ *Ibid.* p. 372.

mind is to call it a world.”¹ Man’s thoughts are his world’s thinking in him, and his deeds are its deeds by means of him.

We have thus extended the meaning of ‘individuality’ by making it comprehensive. But have we not destroyed its responsibility and denied freedom? The difficulty is grave, and it lies right across our path. I can do little more than indicate the direction in which its solution may be sought. The first condition is not only to admit but to hold fast to the truth to which we have been led, namely, that individual selves without ‘a content,’ and ‘a content’ that is not the content of individual minds, are both alike meaningless. There is no subject except in relation to an object, and no object except in relation to a subject; no rational self except in relation to the world, no world, predicable or conceivable, except in relation to the rational self. Separate them and nothing remains. As exclusive of each other they are mere abstractions, that is to say, the products of self-contradictory thinking. Let us dismiss them. They are not realities; they are not the objects of any one’s experience; and have *no* qualities or characters of any kind.

Qualities, characters, belong to reality as *including* rational selves, or finite minds, and not otherwise: or, *vice versâ*, to selves as including reality. This truth, pressed home, implies not only that the world cannot be called beautiful, or its facts true, or the deeds done within it good or evil, except where minds are sensitive and active; it means that its physical qualities are also qualities of a reality that is real only for mind, and has relativity to mind as a fundamental feature.² Neither materialism nor mentalism

¹ Bosanquet, *The Principle of Individuality and Value*, p. 287.

² I do not desire here to raise problems of the ‘Absolute,’ though they lurk beneath the whole discussion.

describes what is real. Philosophy, if it is to make a stepping-stone of its dead theories, must take its stand on the truly real, the only object or content of any experience, viz. that which mind already has in its arms, or rather in its very structure, the unity within which the elements which we distinguish are absolutely inseparable.

Man is not only in the world but of it. Its forces penetrate his individuality. Nature is spoken of as "shaping and filling finite minds."¹ It expresses itself in 'my' thoughts, it is active in 'my' volitions. "The world judges in me" and from "my point of view." (This is the language of one of the most strenuous critics of the tendency to dissolve 'individuality' into its content.) How, then, can I continue to speak of 'me,' or the word 'my' have any meaning?

The answer is to be found, I believe, by an enquiry into the nature of judging and willing, and the functions and characters usually attributed to finite selves. For these characters remain, and the functions are operative still, whether we attribute them to the individual as private, or to the objective content which we call the world, or to both in their relation. And they remain unchanged. Self-conscious individuality cannot be denied, or proved a fiction. And if we attribute it to the world, saying that it is 'the world that wills and knows in finite minds,' then the world has to break out into finite minds. For it is quite certain that these operations cannot be carried on except by mind. The philosophy which would rob man to enrich the world, and throw all the accent on content, has to restore the stolen goods, if not to the same selves, to one or more other selves of precisely the same pattern. The process stultifies itself.

¹ of. Pringle-Pattison's *Idea of God*, p. 202 ff.

Now, if we consider the nature of willing and knowing we find that they not only imply a content (as has been shown), but also a content individuated—
 Mind as focus of the world. 'focussed' is the usual phrase. A thinking being, or a being who wills an action, is sometimes said to be the meeting-point of universals: the centre of relations. Elements otherwise discrete come together in him

“ Whose attributes had here and there
 Been scattered o'er the visible world before,
 Asking to be combined, dim fragments meant
 To be united in some wondrous whole,
 Imperfect qualities throughout creation,
 Suggesting some one creature yet to make,
 Some point where all those scattered rays should meet
 Convergent in the faculties of man.”¹

They are held as known in his single mind, and they are the activities concentrated in his will. *This* much is not denied.

But individuality means more than a 'focus'; personality is not merely 'the centre' of a system which a looker-on can see; 'comprehension' is not merely inclusion. Mind is empty without a content, and the content of a mind is its world; but it does not passively hold its content as a bottle holds wine. It is not an otiose recipient as these metaphors imply. Mind never leaves anything as it finds it: nay, there *is* nothing for it except *in* the finding of it. “ We must take our stand within the self,” if we are to discover and explain the activities which are possible only to a self; and if the self within which we take our stand is “ a world of content judging,” and if facts affirm their own reality, it is still ‘judgment’ that takes place, and makes the

¹ Browning's *Paracelsus*.

affirmation. To understand these activities we must shake ourselves free of all metaphors borrowed from an inert world extended in space, whose events follow one another in time. We deal not merely with a focus, but with 'focussing,' not merely with a centre, but with 'centralizing.' We have to do with activities, and the activities are spontaneities. In thought and will we reach original sources : selves are new beginnings. If these activities spring into operation only at the touch of circumstance; if the self which breaks out into them has a very long history ; if to account for it we have to go back along an interminable line of ancestors and antecedents ; and if every trait and strain within it has come from afar, and needs the whole universe in order to make it possible, nevertheless, when it does appear, laden to the brim with an hereditary freight, it appears as an individuality, as an active new beginning.

Even were it granted to the full that the world, in its course, articulates itself into individuals, rounds itself up here and there into self-conscious selves, their functions as rational beings would be in no wise changed. They would still be individuals, and react upon the world. Such, indeed, is the more natural and simple way of regarding the world, and it would raise no difficulty in the mind of the ordinary man, were it not for the affinity which it might seem to have with Materialism. But the materialist is not wrong in asserting the connexion of mind with the world. He is wrong only in denying the spiritual character of the world from which, as he admits, mind springs. His error is to attribute mental results to the operation of matter and, at the same time, to conceive matter as dead and inert and therefore incapable of such results ; and to that error we are in no way committed. However great the extent of

the borrowing, we must not forget the nature of the borrower whatever his history may be, nor omit the part he plays. He gathers in his content : his past has not passed away but survives in him, and his environment is not merely an environment, it is an object of his thought, a participator in his knowing, and a part of his living structure.

Individuality, then, is essentially ' self-determining,' and self-determination is true sovereignty. Indeed, *complete* self-determination is true infinitude. For the infinite is not that which has not any limits, as philosophers should have learnt long ago from Plato, who showed that what has no limits could be nothing in particular, and, therefore, is nothing at all. In other words, the limitless is the meaningless. It could not be ' defined ' or distinguished, for it would have no specific character or quality. We are in the habit of speaking of limitless space or endless time, not observing that both time and space are assumed to be distinguishable from one another, as two different and mutually exclusive elements, or aspects of the same universe. It is only in the sense that we can conceive the limits we assign to time or space as capable, so far as we conceive them at all, of being pushed further and further, that we call time and space infinite. But remove their limits as far back as we please, imagine them as being unending in extent or duration, they still exclude and are excluded by every other feature of the universe : that is to say, they are still limited. Mind, or rational individuality, on the other hand, is not excluded from whatever else constitutes the character of reality ; for whatever is real is capable of being an object which it knows and, in that sense, possesses as its own. A man's environment, in so far as he knows it, is the content of his mind, *its* laws are his thoughts ; nay, it participates in his thinking. What stands over against him, as his

'other,' is not merely his 'other': it is there *for*, as well as *against*, him; it is *his* object upon which he reflects and acts.

I must dwell for a moment longer upon the nature of Infinitude. Not only does it not depend upon size or magnitude, it is also something more than a quality of a substance. It is a power or faculty. The finite-infinite man. Every quality of a substance is distinguishable from every other quality, and even when related to it is not identified with it. It is limited by something *else*, as the Infinite cannot be.

What follows? Evidently that the true Infinite can neither be without any limits (for that were to be without any character), nor be limited by something else: it must be that which limits itself. It owes what it is *to* itself. It is original, responsible for every character and act which can be attributed to it. All its laws are within, and there is nothing which is not subject to them. We call it the Absolute; and, in the full sense of the term, there is only one Being whom we can call absolute.

Yet, on the other hand, it is this vast claim which we make for man, when we attribute individuality to him, or call him 'free,' 'responsible,' 'capable of doing what is morally right or wrong,' 'an intelligent and moral being.' Whatever his natural history may be, any activities of mind or will which we attribute to him we cannot trace beyond himself. He is free and responsible *in so far* as he is mind or spirit: one with the All, in so far as he says 'Thy will be done.' He is an infinite *in the making*; learning to be free, and capable of learning because he is already potentially free. This claim does not sink him in the world, nor take him out of it. It does not imprison his self in its own exclusive privacy, nor smelt it into its environment. It makes him

potentially master of this world; and every sane thought and right act is an affirmation of his mastery, for by them he possesses the world. The world suffers conversion at his hands. It is not a brute, repellent fact any more. It acquires through his activities a new character.

Which of the forces of the universe we call material or natural could be annihilated and still leave it the universe which we know (in part), or a universe at all? I should venture to think, not any one of them. Least of all—were there least or greatest amongst necessities—can we omit that power in virtue of which the world is a cosmos, and has meaning, beauty, and worth.

But man's mind is finite, we say, and we say truly. Nevertheless the phrase is misleading, if it is allowed to signify that mind stands as a thing *amongst* other things, excluding and excluded. Mind reaches over its objects; it makes them its own, transmuting them into a higher level of existence in the very act, realizing their hidden possibilities and liberating their potencies.

“Man, once desried, imprints for ever
His presence on all lifeless things: the winds
Are henceforth voices, wailing or a shout,
A querulous mutter or a quick gay laugh,
Never a senseless gust now man is born.”¹

That the range of the action of his individuality is narrow, and that his world, in consequence, is at the best but small, no one will deny. Forces which he does not understand and cannot control play around him and upon him. He is the victim of necessities which toss him into life and out of it, and let him alone for no instant between his birth and death. But he is aware of them. He *feels* his limita-

¹ Browning's *Paracelsus*.

tions. They are within, and his own, and he is able to move them back a little day by day as he strives for wisdom. His very life is this widening of himself, by fuller possession of a world which seemed alien and to hamper and hinder, but is found more and more to be the sustenance of his spirit. It is not his 'individuality' that is at fault when the facts of the world are but enigmata, without value or use, and its powers are not servants but masters: it is that his individuality has been imperfectly attained. Let him but grow to his full stature and escape from the limitations that are within; let him but attain himself and the outer necessity becomes an inner power. What other lesson is so plainly taught by the advance of modern science?

Turn the matter how we will, man's nature as self-determining, or as his own law, is his final reality. His operative thought and will are his true being. That they are operative only by means of the world is no proof of their imperfection, but an evidence of their character. Individuality is imperfect, limited, not because it must escape from its privacy, come out of its exclusion, but for the opposite reason. If it has not found itself, or rather, in so far as it has not found itself, it is because it has not entered into its legitimate inheritance. In the degree in which man is a master of himself, he is master of the world. Let him 'acquire' himself, and the world is all his own. He is *free*; and he is free by the help of his world: or, rather, he is a being in process of attaining 'freedom.' *But, in all this, he needs the help of his fellow-man.*

And the moment we speak of freedom and his fellow-men we awaken new questions. I shall try to deal with some of them in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV

THE MUTUAL SERVICE AND MUTUAL OBLIGATIONS OF STATE AND CITIZEN

IN order to ascertain the nature of the State and the meaning of Citizenship I propose in this chapter to ask

The value of the State is what it does. what service the State and the citizen can render to each other. The service which a man or an institution can give is the best exposition

of what it truly is ; for intrinsic character and constitutive qualities express themselves in activities. Every science of concrete facts is a science of what is doing, and deals with forces in operation. And the more perfect the operation of an object the more completely it reveals its nature. The study of defects has its use, but only if we can see beyond them : for, after all, nothing is made up of defects, and they instruct only when we apprehend the positive excellencies of which they are perversions. The State has had many forms, and citizenship has had many levels : what the State and citizenship mean is what they are at their best ; and what they are at their best is best appreciated in the light of the ideal which they have not yet reached, but which is the secret of their striving. The ideal—not the ‘ average ’—is the true type. It is only when we ‘ know what we shall be,’ which is not as yet, that we shall know what we are. As the seed is explained in the full-grown

plant, and the child in the man, and man in his best attainments, and still better aspirations, so it is with the State. 'The pattern in heaven,' as Plato knew, is that which will be followed when 'philosophers are kings'; that is to say, when statesmanship is too wisely practical to be frustrated and defeated by the nature of things. As we have seen, "the ideal is the truth of the actual." It has brought it into being, and it is the power that guides its development as it clothes itself in a succession of forms, and lays them aside from time to time as outworn garments.

If moral and social philosophy, which is the fundamental science of man, had prospered after the manner of the sciences of nature, man's debt to man and to society would have been as impressively evident as his debt to the natural world. And the exposure of the error of regarding his personality as 'impervious' and his freedom as due to his detachment would have been far more complete. The interpenetration with one another of men in society, and especially of citizens of the same State, is fuller, and their identity as rational beings more intense than their physical relations to the natural world can exemplify, even although its forces are present and active in every fibre of their structure. If, on the one hand, a man's feelings, thoughts, and volitions are his own, and no other being can have his pain or pleasure, do his thinking, or wield his will; he can all the same, in spite of the apparent contradiction, know the *same* truth, fall into the *same* error and entertain and pursue the *same* good or bad purpose, as his neighbours. He cannot use or possess the same external objects; and if he shares these with others his own share becomes less. But these exclusive conceptions do not hold at all of the things of the mind. A's knowledge does not become less when he imparts it to B; nor is his will weakened in the

pursuit of the good when his example proves contagious. In this region to give is to gain. Not only do 'the souls of men over-lap,' without merging; but men know themselves better and their purposes become more effective as they live for one another, 'entering into one another's interests,' as we say, so that their lives, in no merely figurative sense, are one without ceasing to be many. It was one who set a high value on the souls of men and laid the foundations of a great kingdom who said: "Abide in me, and I in you." "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."¹ If a man's interests are his true being, so that for him 'to live' is to serve the cause with which, as we say, he has 'identified himself,' then, in a most real sense, the seat of his soul and the fount of its activities is in his world, and pre-eminently in his social world.

The

paradox.

We are tempted, at each step, to regard such statements as metaphors, and to retract their sober meaning as soon as we make them. But I believe that the existence and possibility of society are not intelligible on any other terms; and that it is the influence of metaphor, the practice, only partly avoidable, of explaining the things of mind which we cannot see, in terms of things we touch and handle, which leads us to lower their meaning. It is difficult to hold at the same time that, of all the things that we can know, minds are at once the most independent and lonely, and also the most intensely interdependent and one. And yet, it is questionable if the history of human society, and, in particular, of the State, exemplifies any fact

¹ John xv. 4, 6.

more fully than this: that as it moves towards its ideal and attains its true self, its unity as a whole becomes deeper and more secure in the loyalty of its citizens, and at the same time their liberty within it becomes greater. The power of the good State empowers the citizen, and the power of the good citizen empowers the State.

The first condition of comprehending *how* this can be is to hold fast to the fact that it *is*. But it is remarkable how shallow and intermittent our recognition of this fact is apt to be. In the ordinary course of our daily life the affairs of the State appear to be very remote. We distinguish them sharply from our 'personal' affairs, and except on rare occasions and in a very restricted number of ways we do not concern ourselves much about them. Our sense of responsibility to the State is light, and we find it easy to delegate our political and civic duties, reserving for ourselves the luxury of criticising those who perform them. Having provided for ourselves and families, paid our taxes, contributed some modicum of our means to our church, given our support to a select few institutions, and cast our votes in the elections of the municipality and State, we think we can cry quits with our country, call ourselves good citizens and go about conscience free. We are not aware of the omnipresence of its sustaining care: that it is to our spiritual what the sky and the earth are to our physical well-being.

Nor do we recognize its constant need of the devoted good will of its citizens. "I must point out what seems at first a curious fact," says Prof. Bradley. "A State rests on, and, in a sense, only exists in, the minds and wills of its members, so that, if mind and will in all Frenchmen could suddenly vanish, the French State would do so too. And, further, the improvement of this State depends on the ideas

~~interaction~~

of its members, and their will to make their ideas good. And yet what we call the 'nature' of the State does not depend on their thinking this or that, and if they think and will what conflicts with that nature they will not succeed. They will succeed only by developing further so much of that nature as is already developed in France or elsewhere. On the other hand, there can be no more fatal error than simply to identify the nature of the State with any development of it that has hitherto appeared. It only lives in realizing capacities still unfolded, and a State that does not advance goes back, and, apart from any external violence, may even die." ¹

The mutual implication of State and citizen has the unity and intensity of a single life. Nevertheless we find occasionally, even to-day when the social conscience of men has been startled out of its slumber, men otherwise estimable ask and give a very lame answer to the question — 'why should I fight or toil for the State: what has the State done for me?' And there are many thousands of men, fighting and toiling heroically, who are inspired to great deeds by some vague sense, rather than by any intelligent knowledge, of the greatness of the cause to which they have given themselves. This is not as it should be. The fate of such men is needlessly cruel. Their task is incalculably harder than his who has learnt something of the extent of his borrowing from his country, whose duties, in consequence, are a sacred privilege, and whose sufferings are transmuted into the passionate exaltation of a religious martyr.

Granted, if you like, that the State is not 'highest,' nor 'as such,' or 'in itself' (whatever 'in itself' or 'as such'

¹ Address on "International Morality" in *The International Crisis and its Ethical and Psychological Aspects*, p. 47.

means, in the hands of those who are always qualifying their utterances with these terms) anything better than a human invention: it does not follow that it may not *stand* for the highest. If it stands *under* the moral law, if it recognizes and wills what is right because it is right, doing the just for the sake of justice, it *is* highest. The virtue of a Good that is absolute passes into the minor deeds of the humblest agents, when these deeds are done for its sake; and the power of the moral universe sustains them. Moreover, the State 'in itself' or 'as such' is, in truth, that which does stand for the highest. Not that it always knows the highest or always wills it—but when it does not it is *not* itself, for its nature is to stand for the good; and to stand for it in more ways, and in ways that surpass the means and power of any individual. "What is the end or object for which the State exists—its reason to be?" asks Mr. Bradley, in his admirably clear way. "Aristotle, after his manner, replied in two words, 'Good life.' We may expand a little and say 'The best possible life of its members,' or 'The fullest possible development in them of the forces and faculties of man' (a Mazzinian formula), or 'To make of human nature in them all that it has in it to become' (which is more like Green's language)." ¹

"High professions!" it will be said; "but what of its performance? How many of these things has the State ever done for me? I own nothing except what I have earned, and I pay day by day from childhood to old age, in the sweat of my brow, for the bare means of a scanty livelihood. It is not to the State that I owe that my children are not hungry and naked, or that their mother does not go about begging for their bread."

¹ *Ibid.* p. 49.

The State denies me rights that it grants to others. Its privileges pass me by. It is not to me that it has given position or power, social status or material wealth. It has not even been a passive looker-on, while these things are transmitted from father to son by the crude law of natural descent, which respects neither merit nor manhood. It has ratified the inequalities and substantiated rights and possessions which have never been earned by those who enjoy them ; its laws exist to maintain them, and its forces are at the back of its laws. It is for others to live or die for the State : I owe it nothing."

A very wise man, who went about day by day in ' utter poverty ' teaching virtue and practising it all his life, discussed this matter with his friends, when
 The answer. he was in prison awaiting the hour of his death, condemned by the unjust laws of an unjust State. His answer is worth the conning, every word : I quote its close. " Has a philosopher like you failed to discover that our country is more to be valued and higher and holier far than mother or father or any ancestor, and more to be regarded in the eyes of the gods and of men of understanding ? Also to be soothed and gently and reverently entreated when angry, even more than a father, and if not persuaded obeyed ? And when we are punished by her, whether with imprisonment or stripes, the punishment is to be endured in silence ; and if she leads us to wounds or death in battle, thither we follow as is right : neither may anyone yield or retreat or leave his rank, but whether in battle, or in a court of law, or in any other place, he must do what his city and his country order him, or he must change their view of what is just ; and if he may do no violence to his father or his mother, much less may he do violence to his country." ¹

¹ Plato's *Crito*.

But, it will be asked, on what grounds could one of the wisest and best of men come to such a conclusion? It was not on the peculiar excellence of the little State which was his country. The State of Athens had, at its best, and for a short period, its own great qualities; but, compared with the average modern State it had almost every defect that a State can have. This was natural and inevitable: for it was the first experiment in the greatest enterprise on which mankind has ever ventured, namely, that of creating the State; and if it had all the promise of a great first experiment it had also all its failures. I need not dwell upon them, and the literature of this subject is ample and sound.¹ The study of the Greek State is the beginning of political wisdom, and every enquirer must draw water from this limpid little well in the hinterland of the political past of the race. But the stream has broadened and now fertilizes a wider country; and it carries with it a spiritual commerce beyond the dream of Greece. It will serve our purpose to ask what grounds can be discovered in our own State on which it may rest its title to reverence from its citizens. And the shortest way of answering is possibly to ask not what the State has done for its citizens, but what it has *not* done. "What have you," I may ask, "which is not the gift of your country?"

"I have my individuality," you reply, "and its infeasible rights, which the State must in all circumstances respect." And the answer is sound: so long as a rational person respects himself, that is, so long as he lives as well as he can, his title to the respect of others is complete. But, I ask, supposing your individuality were stripped bare of all that it has acquired and made part of itself through its

¹ See *e.g.* *Hellenica*, especially the articles of Nettleship and Bradley.

participation in the common life *which is possible only within the State*, how much of it would remain? What language would you speak? Every word you now use, or have ever heard, is the language of some country. You have probably never invented one word: very few persons have, although language is always growing like a living tree. Deprived of this single gift you would stand mute and helpless amongst your fellows, understanding and understood of none. Would you be an intelligent being? Granted your language, what of the things which language conveys? Whose songs were sung around your cradle, and whose fables delighted your dawning mind? From the time when your outlook on your little world was widened through hearing that "Jack and Jill went up the hill," until, possibly like Lear,

"A poor, infirm, weak and despis'd old man"

you

"Bide the pelting of the pitiless storm"

let loose by man's wickedness, and are ready to cry with him to the "All-shaking thunder" to

"Strike flat the thick rotundity of the world,"

it is your country's thoughts that have gone with you every step of the way. You are a maker of some kind, if you are a worker, and if your individuality has any use or power. Who has provided you with your material, and taught you skilful ways of dealing with it; and who buys your product and makes some recompense for your toil? You have eaten your morning meal at your country's table, instead of gathering berries or seeking the flesh of wild animals in the woods; you have walked to your work along your country's roads, and will return at evening to a home,

your 'castle,' whose safety and privacy comes from your country's care. If you are married and have children, and you find an ample return for all your toil in the constancy of their loyalty and the sweet service of their love, under whose charge and through whose fostering has the happiness of your hearth been made possible? It has been for countless centuries in the making. If you examine the material out of which it has been spun you will find therein the trace of the wisdom and the toil and the suffering and the endurance of good men in whom and through whom, generation after generation, traditions were formed and customs were established, whose mystic virtue has sufficed to change the instincts, desires, and passions of primitive man, crude and gross and often lawless beyond those of brute beasts, into one of the fairest possessions the heart of man can desire.

I do not wonder that good men have in these times reckoned their own lives, and even lives dearer far than their own, light as chaff in comparison with the life of their country. Mr. Bradley, in a striking passage, has made that comparison for us. He is asking whether a country's duty can be settled by simple comparison with the duties of a citizen. "You, an individual citizen, have interests in a special sense your own. But you may well think it your duty to injure some of them; to be poor when you might be well off, to leave many of your capacities undeveloped that you may do good through the disproportionate growth of one or two; even to weaken your health and shorten your life for some worthy object; nay, if need be, to risk it or throw it away for the life of another. Asked to justify your conduct, you might answer perhaps that your life is but one of forty million English lives, that what you lose others gain, and that there are plenty to take your

place. But England, your State, is forty million lives. For it to surrender *its* interest, to make itself poor, weak, or maimed is to do that to forty millions, many of them children. . . . Nor is this all. It, your country, is not merely these forty millions, any more than an oak is the leaves of this year. Your country's span of life is not a little three score years and ten. Its honour is the honour of its countless dead, and both its honour and its welfare are those of its innumerable sons and daughters yet to be." And even this again is not all, as he goes on to show. Many and grave as our country's defects and errors may be, there are few nations which have equal value for mankind. Mr. Bradley modestly suggests that there may be six; but even if there were, he would agree that there is not one which could take its place, without leaving the world the poorer.

In ordinary times we are as little conscious of its worth, and of our need of it, as we are of the air we breathe, and as little grateful for its laws as we are for the law of gravitation. Man is apt to take the elemental conditions of his well-being for granted, until there is a risk of losing them. Our love for our country depends on old habit and familiarity, on neighbourliness and memories of childhood; and we are hardly aware of its presence unless we happen to be in 'exile' or some 'foreigner' speaks ill of it. It is a mere sentiment or instinct, entirely 'pardonable' and pleasing to witness, but, it would seem, little able to sustain the cold analysis of the intellect. But that which seems is not always that which is. Sentiments may have deep roots, and instincts are seeds capable of blossoming into generous thoughts and high purposes—sparks that may break out into a conflagration when circumstance brings the fuel. Our 'country' may come to mean more for us than our own

lives; and the bonds of citizenship may prove to be sacred, to our own and to our country's gain. Our fuller understanding of the nature of the State and of our relations to it, like our fuller knowledge of the natural order, may raise the value of our own lives and be to our country a new security—extending the ethical power of both.

We are living amongst such enlightening circumstances at the present time, and very plain and humble minds have felt their lift. "I am not exaggerating, or using high-falutin language," says Gilbert Murray, as he speaks of the way in which, during the war, "we have become familiar with the knowledge that there are things in life which are greater than life." "Go out into the street and talk with the first bus-driver or cabman who has lost his son in the war; he may be inarticulate, but if once he begins to speak freely, you will find him telling you that he does not grudge his son's life."¹ Witnessing such facts as these, even the scholar or reflective thinker escapes beyond the limits of the ordinary range of his ideas. The horizon of his world is wider; objects stand in a new perspective and their values have changed. Mingling with his old love for his country he feels for the first time 'a profound pride'; for its ethical meaning has acquired a new gravity and depth. He has caught a glimpse of the magnitude of the moral wealth which the troubled history of his country has massed in the past and which it has carried, a living power, into the souls of its citizens to-day; and he sees the State itself contemplating a new adventure in the moral world—nothing less than that of breaking through its own ancient barriers, the barriers of an 'egoism' which felt no responsibility for aught beyond its own boundaries.

¹ *Faith, War and Policy*, p. 180.

“ I am proud,” says Mr. Murray in a noble passage—
“ I am proud of our response to the Empire’s call, a response absolutely unexampled in history, five million men and more gathering from the ends of the earth ; subjects of the British Empire coming to offer life and limb for the Empire, not because they were subjects, but because they were free and willed to come. I am proud of our soldiers and our sailors, our invincible sailors ! I am proud of the retreat from Mons, the first and second battles of Ypres, the storming of the heights of Gallipoli. No victory that the future may bring can ever obliterate the glory of those days of darkness and suffering, no tomb in Westminster Abbey surpass the splendour of those violated and nameless graves.

“ I am proud of our men in the workshop and the factory, proud of our men and almost more proud of our women—working one and all day after day, with constant overtime and practically no holidays, for the most part demanding no trade safeguards and insisting on no conditions, but giving freely to the common cause all that they have to give.

“ I am proud of our political leaders and civil administrators, proud of their resource, their devotion, their unshaken coolness, their magnanimity in the face of intrigue and detraction, their magnificent interpretation of the nation’s will. I do not seek to palliate mistakes or deprecate criticism. . . . I will venture to state one humble citizen’s opinion : that, whether you look at the Head of the Government or whether you look at the great Secretaryships and Administrative offices, from the beginning of the war till now, I doubt if at any previous period of English history you will find a nation guided by such a combination of experience, high character and commanding intellectual power. . . . [But] while I am proud of all the things I

have mentioned about Great Britain, I am most proud of the clean hands with which we came into this contest, proud of the Cause for which with clear vision we unsheathed our sword, and which we mean to maintain unshaken to the bitter or the triumphant end." ¹

What shall we say of such language? Is it the language of exalted emotion only, or of the inspiration which is also revelation? I do not think there can be any doubt. When the red dawn of war broke, it found us a nation which, in the material sense, was all unprepared for war—its army was 'contemptibly' small. But the spirit that could create a vast army, when injustice stalked abroad, was not unprepared. Here was a nation which by imperceptible increments had accumulated, all unconsciously, during its long history, a love of liberty through having suffered for it, and a respect for rights, and a certain sense of fairplay in the petty affairs of the daily common life,—the very soul of political wisdom; and, thus equipped by a past which in spite of many wrongs was on the whole honourable, a past woven into its present, it stood forth, when the sudden call came, with a tradition, a way of thinking and of acting worked into a living character whose slumbering strength and wealth and splendour were, until that time, all unknown. If we have trustworthy grounds for believing that, in the future, we shall be able to carry into our domestic and political life, and especially into our economic dealings with one another and with other nations, the same qualities, we may face it with generous hopes. They will not prove false: such virtue resides in a great love for a country whose ways are just.

The citizen's love for his country, if it rests on a sense of its nobility of character, widens his own moral outlook.

¹ *Faith, War and Policy*, pp. 126-8.

Its progress, he will recognize, as did a great philosopher, to be "the coming of the kingdom of heaven upon earth"; and the little services which he contributes to it, at his station, however humble, will have a new value. He finds that through doing the duty of the day he is securing more than his own comfort and the well-being of those who depend upon him: he is building his own character, and at the same time he is a humble hod-bearer on the walls of a greater and far more permanent edifice than his own character: he is building the State.

This sense of one-ness with a great cause, of a unity which is more vital than any copartnership, exalts the value of life beyond all computation. It is one of the secrets of the power of both morality and religion. And a good citizen of a good State has a right to its support, and he does well to foster it by fuller knowledge of the magnitude of his cause. For his life and that of his country *are* one. Neither he nor it *can* live for itself alone. He finds his living personality in the State, and the State finds its personality in him. In his consciousness, up to the measure of his intelligence and will to good, the purposes of the State are formed. He is its eye and ear and thinking soul.

Neither the unity nor the independence of the State and its citizens is intelligible from the points of view which, so far as they go, are valid enough of the relations between man and the natural world. For there is in that world no object that will compare in its intricacy with the soul of his fellow-man, and no such stubborn and resourceful antagonist to his will. Nature freely parts with its gifts to the comprehending mind: its laws are man's explicatory principles, and its forces become his instruments. But human personalities are all entrenched in themselves; we can surround them

The false
analogy of
the natural
world.

with influences but we cannot penetrate within, nor should we attempt to do so. Men are not meant to *use* one another. Personality is an object to be revered and served, and it resists the inroads of the invader.

On the other hand, there is no such unity as that between personalities ; and it deepens as they grow. Bring before a class of boys in school a new mathematical problem, and you may easily be offered as many solutions as there are boys in the class. Instruct them, and you may get one answer from them all. And practical wisdom unites men's wills in the same way. It is the developed State, the State which has devoted itself most successfully to bringing out the capacities of its citizens, which moves to great ends as one mind and will. Differentiation and integration go hand in hand in the realm of natural life. The higher the animal organism the more numerous its organs, and, at the same time, the more intense the unity of the single life that expresses itself in all their functions. But it is in the life of the spirit of man that the operation of these opposite processes is most fully seen, and in that life at its best. The sciences of man will not progress with the sure step of the natural sciences till this truth is more fully recognized. The conception, or category, or point of view of 'system,' of unity in and through difference, must have fuller and more consistent sway. Then it will be seen that separateness and sameness are both alike misleading : men are neither separate nor the same, because they are both.

Above all we must no longer cry " Lo here ! " and " Lo there ! " over the things of mind. Analysis, whether of the individual mind or of the greater mind of society, is a process of discovering relations, and relations are aspects, or elements of a unity ; they not only bind but constitute.

They are not merely connexions between minds, but qualities of mind. Theorists have discussed the question whether the individual or the State comes first. The discussion is futile. They have come to be and they have grown together. When man was so rudimentary that we could not call him man, except for the promise that lay in him, so was the State. If he was the victim of lawless passion and caprice, and his ends were inconstant and blind and narrow, even in their selfishness, so was the State : it was a State only in promise. The State has been regarded as the result of a compact between individuals ; and individuals have been represented as originally independent of each other, hard nuclei, impervious '*realia*,' each living in his own separate world, not even seeing or hearing the same things. They see and hear, we are told, every one his own proper object. Ten men looking at the sun see ten suns, one sun for each ; and the problem is, "How and in what sense do the ten come to know that the actual object of each is the same individual object for all ?" How then, we ask, do they escape from their imprisonment within themselves, and come out and communicate with each other ? There is no answer. It is impossible. Human society could not arise amongst such exclusive beings ; they themselves would not be human. As well try to make up a living tree by gathering leaves and branches and roots together, as seek to build society from such material. The *nature* of man is social, and the nature of the State is human ; one life pulsates throughout the whole structure, and, touch that structure wherever you will, you touch the life of the whole. Man does nothing by 'himself' and is nothing by 'himself.' He is only another name for *his* world. What we call character from one point of view is from another environment. He has given

to it all its meaning and use, be they great or small. And yet the meaning and use which he has made is just the meaning and use which he has found : they were implicit in his material as a potency awaiting the awakening touch of his spirit. As well ask about the fortunes of his organism apart from the nourishment it draws from the physical world, as ask about the condition of his mind apart from its commerce with it. Neither body nor soul could live : their life is their intercourse with the world. And if it is through his world that man lives, it is through and in man, as we have seen, that the world attains its spiritual significance, and reveals itself as his helpmate in all the arts and all the sciences. We never find man and nature except as interacting elements of one whole, which is neither mere or abstract spirit nor mere or abstract matter, but spirit pulsating in outward deeds, and matter instinct with life and soul.

Nevertheless, even if man were endowed with sufficient intelligence to comprehend and use the powers of the natural world, he could not attain what is best in him except in relation to his fellows. The ascent
of man. Alone with nature (could we conceive him), 'monarch,' like Crusoe on his island, 'of all he surveys,' he could not become a moral being. At the best he would be a powerful and dangerous brute. There would, in such a case, be no limit to his claims, except the limit of his power to enforce them; and he would have no means of making them good except force. But none of his claims could be *rights*, and he would have no duties. He could appeal to no authority that would give dignity to his demands, endorsing and sustaining them; and he would neither have nor recognize any law that liberated him from his own self-seeking and caprice. But where there is no law there

can be no freedom ; and freedom has no meaning except where there is necessity. For freedom is a power to do, a doing and not merely a state of being. “ Nobody is free. All action is freedom.” But no action is possible except upon that which has some constant nature of its own. Man could *do* nothing, that is, he would not be free, in a natural environment that was law-less ; and he could do nothing either right or wrong, he could not be morally free were there no unchangeable moral law. And the moral law must be a universal, binding on *all* rational beings and demanding loyalty to a common good.

It follows that morality is not possible except when a ‘ person ’ meets a ‘ person.’ ‘ Not less than two persons can be moral ’ ; for not fewer than two can come under a ‘ common law,’ which both must respect. Milton tells us that Adam’s

“ Fair large front and eye sublime declared
Absolute rule.”

But it was not as an absolute ruler that he looked at Eve, who,

“ As a veil down to the slender waist,
Her unadorned golden tresses wore
Dishevelled, but in wanton ringlets waved
As the vine curls her tendrils—which implied
Subjection, but required with gentle sway,
And by her yielded, by him best received
Yielded.”

Here lay the possibility of the intercourse of spirit with spirit. Passion meets passion and desire desire, and both have a new nobility ; mind looks mind in the eye and sees its own reflection ; will confronts will and out of their very strain is born mutual restraint and consideration, and the faint promise of regard and reverence. A common law

emerges, and with its control the first beginning of the moral life. Man, in order to become man, must find himself amongst rivals ; but his rivals throughout his whole career, from the ignorant savage to the sage, are bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, sharing the *same* thoughts (not merely similar ones), entertaining the *same* purposes, and very early in his career wanting the same things. Collisions arise *because* there are combinations ; and neither collisions nor combinations could arise except in virtue of that unity which is deeper than both, and which is the root, indeed, the fact of society. There cannot be difference where there is not unity—a truth forgotten by those who described the ‘ State of Nature ’ as that in which every one is at war with every one else. War arises from the “ community ” ; it implies the kinship of a common nature, and it is waged within it. But it involves a double loss ; for the war between individuals is also a war within each of them. The struggle without is a reflexion of disorder within. And gradually, little by little, the cause of the loss begins to appear. Agreement is found by each to be the gain of all ; selfishness becomes more enlightened, and uses more subtle methods ; the individual good is found to be a common good, and the common good to be the best means of private good when it is sought not as a means but as an end. Then it is sought for its own sake : the care for others comes first, and when the good is sought first all other things ‘ are added.’ Man has come to his own : he is a moral being.

To follow, even in briefest outline, the steps of this process is far beyond the scope of my present purpose. “ The story of mind begins long before the free mind, the object of psychology to-day, has appeared on the scene.” But its tissue, look where we will, proves to be social. Investigation can neither begin nor stop at the exclusive

individual. "His mind is not a separable entity, and throughout the story no such entity has appeared."¹ "*Wir freie Geister* (we emancipated intelligences), is the favourite cry of a modern German thinker, as he thinks of himself and a band of advanced thinkers. It is a cry that calls for humility at least as much as pride. One has read of armies in retreat before some terrible destroyer, brought face to face suddenly with a deep and precipitous ravine, and compelled by the mere pressure of horror from behind to march on and on, till the gap was filled with prostrate human forms, and the survivors reached the other bank safely by the involuntary sacrifice of their front ranks. Something like this is happening in the annals of each life. That each of us can individually seek to develop our individual minds, prosecute our separate studies, reach intellectual, artistic or social eminence, is possible only because we are raised on the joint hands of many unknown to fame, who formed by stern resolve and hard clench a solid roof over that abyss of mere animality into which we should otherwise fall. Science, art, and religion, all that makes life glorious, all that constitutes the special glory of individuals, grows out of the root of sociality. "They rest and grow," says Hegel, "in the State."

"But what, according to Hegel, is the State?" "Not something, assuredly, which lives in London, and has its holy of holies in the offices of the Treasury :
The State as the organization of moral right. not something which lives for the time being in the Cabinet, and in the upper and influential circle of the bureaucracy. The State, as Hegel conceives it, is the completed organization, the self-contained social form, in which human life can develop its ideal activities : it is an organization in which the family

¹ Bosanquet's *Philosophy of the State*, p. 254.

forms the perennial, and so to speak the natural basis, the ever fresh, ever creative spring of moral, intelligent and artistic life ; in which the interdependence of social effort, commerce, social and commercial demand and supply, constitutes the ever-widening stream ; while the more purely political organization itself blends all these divergent interests and natural ties into one single and comprehensive nationality or people, wherein the members can both play their own parts well, and contribute their quota in an orderly way to the total work of humanity.”¹

I have said that, alone with nature, were that conceivable, man could not be a moral being. On the other hand, he could not be moral *except* in relation to a natural world. A completely moralized world, were *that* conceivable, in which all that is natural had been ‘overcome’ as the plain man says, or ‘transmuted,’ to use the language of the philosopher, or ejected, as is the aim of the ascetic, would leave him without the task in fulfilling which he lives as a moral being. Morality consists, not in annulling or absorbing the natural appetites : that were to dehumanize man. It is not a process of negating or destroying what is natural, but of eliciting its fullest meaning and worth : it does not abolish, it consecrates. It is not a defect in man that he is not a pure spirit, but is only *in process* of learning and doing what is right. There is no better way of being employed than in learning goodness. His nature is revealed and his worth is measured by “the way he makes” ; and he can make way only by realizing his ideals in the world of sense.

Hence as a being who is essentially active, and must be doing, he must “come out of himself.” He must impose his will on that which is without. He must appro-

¹ Wallace’s *Lectures and Essays on Natural Theology and Ethics*, pp. 120, 121.

priate it, make it the instrument of his well-being ; and in doing so he penetrates it with his personality, calls it " Mine," and gives it the sacredness of his own personality. But when he thus comes out of himself, into an outer world within which he sets his claim, he takes a negative attitude towards every other will. His " property " is exclusively his. " Mine " means, in all external things, " not thine." Moreover, every personality wants to be, and in a manner is, universal. It would fain lay hands, as we have seen, on all the world. " At no point can it stop and say, ' Thus far do I go, and what is beyond me is indifferent.' It cannot help, therefore, coming face to face with other personalities, every one of whom ' by nature ' makes the same unlimited claim. Here for the first time it meets what limits it. And the problem henceforth is that of dealing with these limits."

Morality is the process of learning *how* to deal with them. And throughout, from the first crude stage of the moral life to its widest and noblest, there is a choice of two methods: one throws the stress upon the exclusive, the other on the inclusive, side of personality. Both methods alike imply social relations, and the contact of will with will. When I say " Mine," I demand from others a recognition of my claim ; and my first method of gaining that recognition is likely to be the crude method of compulsion. But the results of the method of compulsion are always insecure. Force employed against persons is a challenge, and it calls out an opposing force. Security comes from consent and agreement, and the fuller the consent the more stable the possession. The other will, once it assents, instead of straining against my own, strengthens it. And thus the relations of will to will, at first apparently merely dispersive and negative, become a positive and a combining power.

And an 'objective world of right,' a common law, is slowly built up, above the caprice of the separate personalities, yet without violating them : for the *common law*, the *acknowledged right*, has been set up by, and is the expression of, their own wills.

And rights imply duties. A's right against B is B's duty towards A. Rights and duties are the same facts looked at from opposite points of view ; and when rights are respected, or even opposed, as rights, or duties done or even violated as duties, we are already in the moral world. Its boundaries may be narrow and its foundations may be insecure, but here we have already what constitutes the essence of the State ; for the relations are between *persons*, and persons are at once sovereign and mutually serving wills.

The story of the growth of the 'objective world' of morality, compacted of the relation of free wills to free wills, or, more strictly, of wills learning what it is to be free, is the most interesting and significant in the world, were it only because it implies such a victory over the world as brings it over to man's side. Here is to be found beating the very life-pulse of human history, as it unfolds, always in obedience to ideals, which are themselves the meaning and potency of what is actual and therefore both first and last.

And the story is told twice over, or, to use the metaphor of Plato, it is written both in small and in large letters, in the growth of the individual citizen and of the individual State. In fact the State *is* the citizen 'writ large,' and the citizen *is* the State writ small. There is, in the final resort, no good State except where there are good citizens, nor good citizens except in a good State. Every citizen is responsible for his State ; and the State *is* responsible for every one of its citizens. If his personal freedom is limited, either by

its laws or through the obstruction of his fellows; if he lives under a tyranny and amongst bad neighbours, it is at once *his* misfortune and *his* fault. And, on the other hand, if the means of the best life are not within reach of every one of the citizens of a State, the State is responsible, and it is imperfect and insecure. The government under which a people lives is, in the last resort, a reflexion of their own character; if it is tyrannical it is because they have loved freedom too little and suffered too little to attain it. They are participants in its wrongs, and have riveted their own chains.

We may, and indeed must, say that ideally every individual is responsible for the world, and the world for every individual. It is for mankind that man at his best—the man whom men call ‘divine’—both lives and dies; not for his own age nor for his own people only. The good shepherd does not rest till he has found the hundredth sheep and brought it to the fold on his shoulders. History as it marches onwards must wait for the halt and the lame.

“Progress,” says Browning, is

“The law of life, man is not Man as yet.
Nor shall I deem his object served, his end
Attained, his genuine strength put fairly forth,
While every here and there a star dispels
The darkness, here and there a towering mind
O’erlooks its prostrate fellows: when the host
Is out at once to the despair of night,
When all mankind alike is perfected,
Equal in full-blown powers—then, not till then,
I say, begins man’s general infancy.”¹

Morality does not tolerate a limited ideal. The State and the individual once admitted to be in process of acquiring

¹ *Paracelsus*.

a moral character, or as becoming free, or as finding in one another and in the world without not hinderers but helpers—it matters not which phrase we use—seek a good which is Absolute, and therefore all-comprehensive. Hence both the State and the Individual are in truth, if they only knew it, in the service of humanity, and they are loyal to their own good in the degree in which they are faithful to its well-being. As the citizen does not need to shed his private virtues nor spill his individuality in order to be a good member of the State, so the State has not to sacrifice its own true ends in order to be ‘a helper of the world.’ This is, above all other things, what the States are in process of learning and teaching at the present time. We shall not love our country less for its suffering care of little nations. The flame of our patriotism burns with a purer flame, as we see it striving for a wider good, side by side with other States which are at length finding

“New hopes and cares which fast supplant
Their proper joys and griefs”;

and growing

“too great
For narrow creeds of right and wrong, which fade
Before the unmeasured thirst for good : while peace
Rises within them ever more and more.”¹

The ideal is high, the way is long and steep; but I know not how either to lower the ideal or to shorten the way, if it be true that man is a moral being and the State is a moral institution. And to deny their moral nature were at once to commit against them an ultimate wrong and to make them unintelligible. We cannot even limit the functions of the man and the State, without error and injustice—provided only they are loyal to the law of the good.

¹ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER V

THE BASIS AND PRINCIPLE OF THE INTERFERENCE OF THE STATE

AT the close of the last chapter I was speaking of the relations between the ideal State and the ideal citizen. They seemed to be so intimate that the well-being of State and citizen was identical. Each found its own good in pursuing the good of the other; and each was an end to itself through being means to the other. It follows that the individual has no duties within the State which are not also, directly or indirectly, a benefit and therefore a duty to the State; and, on the other hand, that the State stands under no obligations to itself which are not primarily obligations to its own citizens and, less directly, to mankind. If this be true, all attempts at limiting the functions of either the State or the citizen must be not only futile but an error and a wrong, so long, that is, as they are true to their best. The individual cannot but be a strength to the State so long as he fulfils the duties of his station; and the State cannot but provide the citizens with the means for evolving their highest powers so long as it fulfils its own ends. "Love God," said Augustine, "and do as you please." It would seem that we can, in the same spirit, bid the individual and the State, each in its own way, "Seek justice, and let go!"

But all this applies, it will be said, only to the *ideal* State and the *ideal* citizen; and the practical man usually has a prejudice against speculating about ideals, especially if they are remote. They The actual. seem to him to be irrelevant and useless, and apt to lead to futile adventures. And there is at least an element of truth in this view. The duty that is beyond all reach is, in truth, not a duty: 'Thou oughtest' implies 'thou canst.' Duty, as we have seen, depends on circumstances as well as on principles, for the principles must deal with the circumstances. Moreover, we do not even *know* 'the ideal good,' and cannot picture the ideal State or the ideal citizen. The character and the content of 'the good' are revealed only little by little as the world progresses, and, according to Plato, it is not intelligible except to good men. To the evil the things of the spirit are 'foolishness.'

Nevertheless it does not follow that the pursuit of the highest good we can conceive, and the habit of dwelling upon what is not but ought to be, may not be wise. On the contrary, the individual life at its best draws its beauty and strength, which are the most practical of all gains, from the fact that it carries with it, or rather lives always within, the atmosphere of its ideals. Man, in so far as he is moral, never seeks a second best. However poor his actual attainments, he takes up his task looking unto 'the author and finisher of his faith': and does it all the better. And, so far as I can see, the statesman who guides the State, amidst the political complications of his too often "low, obscure and petty world," does not waste either his country's strength or his own by striving

"To have to do with nothing but the true,
The good, the eternal—and these, not alone

In the main current of the general life,
But small experiences of every day.”¹

Statesmanship is not mere opportunism, or empiricism, or compromise, as we are all too ready to believe. And, after all, moral ideals in this, like every other sphere of human activity, are sound and practically efficient only in so far as they are the essential truth of actual circumstance. The wise statesman is precisely the man who knows what manner of good, what opportunity for progress towards what is better, lies hidden in the present circumstance awaiting to be seized. He is foolish and ineffective, on the other hand, in the degree in which he does not seek that good. The world, after all, has drawn its great reformers from the ranks of the idealists—

“The high that proved too high, the heroic for earth too hard,
The passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky
Are music sent up to God by the lover and the bard ;
Enough that he heard it once : we shall hear it by-and-by.”²

Successful practice in the affairs of the State and of citizenship depends upon successful enquiry and thought, and the method of enquiry is closely analogous to that of the biologist. He always interprets the plant or animal in the light of that which it is to become. He follows through a successive variety of forms the self-revelation of a single principle ; and the *truth* of the earlier form ever comes out in the later. There is a similar continuity in the moral life, whether of individuals or States. It is not broken by any sudden changes. The ‘miracle’ of conversion is like the miracle of a bush bursting into flower, not the less marvellous because it

¹ *The Ring and the Book*, Giuseppe Caponsacchi.

² Browning’s *Abt Vogler*.

follows from antecedent conditions. And the most violent revolutions in the State will be found to fit into its history, and to have their entirely natural preconditions and consequents. High moral ideals are not only impracticable but unintelligible to the State or individual whose life is low ; just as Newton's *Principia* is unintelligible to the elementary mathematician. And yet the highest ideals are present, in a sense, wherever an objective good is sought for its own sake ; just as the child is on the way towards comprehending Newton's *Principia* when he discovers that two plus three makes five. Wherever there is evolution there is an identity in the process of changing, and the change which seems to supplant its predecessor really explains and preserves it. The most rudimentary State and the most simple man, seeking the best they know, are exposing the nature and possibility of the highest ; and ultimately no stage in their progress, nor form which it assumes is intelligible in any other light. In a word, except in the light of what is to be, they can pass no judgment on that which is ; without such judgment there could be no object of desire, no end to be attained, no motives of action, and therefore no life. It is not necessary, it is not even possible, to set aside ideal conceptions in the affairs of citizenship, in order to deal with " hard, practical realities." True insight in statesmanship does just the opposite : it catches the gleam of the struggling ideal.

What then, we may ask, is that principle of identity which must be present in every State and which reveals itself more and more fully in the successive stages of its growth ? This is the same question as to ask ' What is the least that a State can be in order to be a State, and what, at the same time, is the best and most it can be when all its powers are full-blown ? '

The principles of State community.

In the first place, it must be single, or whole, or individual, whether it is a City-State or a World-Empire. It must have one more or less effective will, in virtue of which either by consent or force, or both, it exercises authority over its own citizens. A State that is not one, or cannot govern, is a meaningless word and nothing more. In the second place, in order to possess that unity and individuality it must to some extent stand for the common good of its members and be the means of securing at least some of the conditions by which they live together more or less helpfully. As a rule it will be found that the State has a natural basis—as indeed the moral life of the individual also has ; for morality, as we have seen, is in truth nothing but what is natural at its best. The State has grown out of the family, although it has features which are only latent in the family, and which, when developed, break it up into many families more or less independent of one another. Its unity is not that of blood-relationship only, but of many mind-relationships as well, springing out of the former originally. “ You have some millions of people,” says Mr. Bradley in his sketch of the modern State, “ inhabiting a definite piece or pieces of the earth, and, for the most part, so united by blood, language, customs, traditions, and history, that they have a special character and so can more fully understand and count on one another, and can live together more easily and happily than any chance collection of human beings could.”¹ They not only tolerate each other, as a chance collection conceivably might do, for a time ; but they “ perform different functions which should, and more or less do, so complement and play into one another that they make a common life and produce a common good.” They become necessary for one another, and they discover

¹ *The International Crisis*, p. 48.

that fact and set value upon it. Their unity becomes an object of their care, and they are held together by their ideals as well as by their natural needs. In the third place and as a consequence, this unity, "the common life, mind or will, expresses itself formally in laws binding on all the members, and in acts explicitly done on behalf of the whole and in its name. It is in these laws, and still more in these acts, that the whole appears most plainly as individual or a single agent, over against its members taken singly, and over against other States." ¹

Can we summarize and say that the State is an individual whose members are also individuals, one will in which many wills are united more or less freely and fully, and which has for its object the common or universal good? So far as I can see, no State can be a State if it entirely lacks this character, and no State can aspire to be anything more than this character fully developed, or to do anything better for its citizens than secure the conditions of its development.

It would appear, therefore, that we are led back to the view of the State and its function which the reading of Plato suggests. *The State is an educational institution, and in the last resort it has to teach only one thing—the nature of the good.* It is to teach it so effectively that its members on recognizing it shall live for it. That Plato's own view of the good was not only incomplete but one-sided cannot be denied. Its articulation was imperfect: his State found rival interests in its citizens which it did not know how to dedicate to the common good, and which, therefore, it was obliged to limit or negate. To maintain the unity of the State, which to him was a paramount aim, he had to sacrifice

The State
as an
educational
institution.

¹ *Ibid.* p. 49.

diversities that are capable of enriching and strengthening it. It required the explication which only the long and troubled practical history of mankind can make to enable us to articulate that unity, and to make it plain that the *true aim and therefore the nature of the State is*—“*The fullest possible development in all its citizens of the forces and faculties of man.*” Plato had seized upon what is essential, namely, that the State is a moral agent in pursuit of the highest and richest moral good : but not even yet can the fulness of the wealth it seeks be computed.

But, it will be asked, have we not once more let go what is actual and practical fact, and lapsed into dealing with mere ideals which, however fair in themselves and logically inevitable, are not found operative in any State the world has ever known ? Surely, it may be objected, we cannot without considerable violence describe the organs through which the State acts—its parliament, its courts of law, its army and navy, its police and so on—as educational institutions engaged in teaching morality ? What is evident is that all these organs of the State are means through which it exercises compulsory power over its members, or against forces that threaten their good or its own existence, from without. Its right and power to exercise force is one of the marks which distinguish it from other societies. If it does not actually exercise force against “good citizens,” it still has force in reserve. It is for them “the ultimate arbiter and regulator, maintainer of mechanical routine, a source of authoritative suggestion, a character which is one with the right to exercise force in the last resort.”¹ But this is something far short of being the moral educator of its members. Force, whether latent or explicit, cannot touch morality, unless it be to obstruct. To seek to enforce

¹ Bosanquet, *Philosophical Theory of the State*, p. 186.

morality, or to seek to promote it by rewards and punishments is, in fact, to violate morality: it is a method often successful in getting actions done which conform externally to what morality demands, but the motive in these cases is not moral, nor, therefore, are the actions. "To force or bribe a man to do what he ought to do freely and morally tends in some degree to interfere with his doing it freely and morally."¹ And this, it is argued, fixes clearly the bounds of the activities of the State. "Its direct power is limited to securing the performance of external actions."² In doing so it can seek to determine the intentions of its citizens, taking cognizance of what they mean to do when it rewards or punishes. But the intention is not the motive, although the act comprises and takes its character from both together. The murderer and the executioner and the soldier defending his country may all alike intend to take life; but their motives may differ as right does from wrong. And the State, according to Green, "has nothing to do with the motive of the actions or omissions, on which, however, the moral value of them depends."³ And the only acts which it ought to enjoin or forbid are those which had better be done (or omitted) from any motive than not to be done (or omitted) at all.

Whatever service the State may seek to render to its citizens, and however pure and direct its purpose of bringing out their best powers, it would seem that it must not attempt to manipulate their souls. "It can enforce actions *outwardly* the same as moral actions, but to force a man to do them morally is beyond its

¹ Bradley, *International Morality*, p. 52.

² Bosanquet, *Philosophical Theory of the State*, p. 188.

³ *Principles of Political Obligation*, p. 343.

power.”¹ The moral life must be private and sacred from all intrusion. Its forces are motives, that is, ends conceived by the agent as desirable or as in some sense good. “Moral action like immoral must be free; and to talk of enforcing it is to talk of a square circle.”²

But does not the State, even if it confines itself to “enforcing actions *outwardly* the same as moral actions,” and therefore of its moral character. affect the inner life and limit the liberty of its citizens? Can it avoid doing so? Are not compulsion and liberty always and inevitably incompatible? No doubt the State has to resort to compulsion. Circumstances there are in every State when the common good must be made secure at the cost of coercing “malignant members”; but can it be a *moral* action to violate the liberty of one for the sake of providing better *outward* conditions of life for the many? The State may or may not be justified on prudential grounds, but morality can never justify the infliction of moral injury on anyone for any end; and there can hardly be a deeper moral injury than that of limiting or taking away the liberty without which morality itself is not possible. Apparently, therefore, “the ideal perfection of a State would involve its own suppression.” Its ideal is *not* to interfere at all: “*Laissez faire, laissez aller!*” In other words, its function is to limit liberty in the few in order to secure it for the many. It is a necessary evil, so long as its citizens interfere with one another’s liberty: but its function even then is negative and external. It interferes to prevent interference. And when its citizens have learnt to abide each within his own ‘sphere’ the primary need for the State exists no longer. Hence it is an instrument which has value *on the way* to the good life, but it becomes more and more needless, or even

¹ *The International Crisis*, p. 51.

² *Ibid.* p. 52.

obstructive, as the good life is attained. It is not itself a moral agent, though it is helpful to moral agents: its activities stop at the threshold of morality, which is always a matter of individual character and its internal springs of action.

What answer can we make to these objections?

I wish, in the first place, to admit the truth which the criticisms contain. Morality cannot be enforced: the State cannot, and should not attempt directly to manipulate motives: compulsion and free-
Reply to objections.
 dom are incompatible: the function of the State is 'to hinder hindrances' to the moral life, and it deals with its outward conditions only. There is, I repeat, a sense in which all these statements may be unreservedly accepted. They are, I believe, quite true. But they are not complete truths, for, as I shall try to show, they accentuate mainly one aspect of the facts. Least of all do they furnish adequate grounds for limiting the functions of the State or for concluding that its ideal is to make itself redundant: or that it is only an instrument of the moral life and not itself a moral agent.

The same line of argument, were it valid, might, with some qualifications, be used to show that the individual citizen is no more a moral agent than the State is. For, in the first place, it is true that individuals cannot compel what is moral. No man can supply another with motives: that were to will what is right instead of him. Nor can he in any direct way constrain the other's volitions. The parents who break their hearts on account of the bad conduct of their son may warn and implore, punish and reward, surround him with one set of circumstances and let loose upon him one kind of influence after another, but to *make* him good, or even do one moral act, is beyond their

power. This truth of the privacy of the self we have already admitted and emphasized. But it is not a complete account of the self. On the contrary, even while we admit that the moral character of the child is beyond the reach of his parents, we nevertheless hold parents responsible for the upbringing of their children, and consider that if they cannot create their moral character they can go far, as we say, towards 'shaping' it. We maintain institutions which have that as their function. Churches have, or ought to have, the 'making of character' as their chief aim; and even States, if they are far-seeing, will have the same purpose at the back of all their enactments. Germany has given the world an obvious example, which it would do well never to forget, of the power of the State to form the character of its citizens. That it has turned that power to an evil and most destructive use is in itself no proof that it could not have been turned to a good use. On the contrary, its success in fostering unlimited devotion on the part of its members to the exclusive good of the German Empire—a good conceived in terms of military force and aggressive domination—suggests that a State which is itself inspired by nobler, that is, by moral ends, or ends which are as universal as rational life, broad and deep as humanity, could lead its citizens to adopt these ends as their dominant motives. The *method* which Germany employed proved successful to a supreme degree. It did reach the national character, and thereby go far to determine the national destiny. It could hardly fail; for, than Education, no more potent instrument exists for uniting a nation's will upon a single purpose. We may condemn the purpose as inconsistent with the ultimate well-being both of the State and of its citizens; but it by no means follows that the method employed to attain that purpose was wrong. It may

or may not be desirable that the schools, the Universities and the Churches should be controlled by the State, as they were in Germany: something may depend on the character of the control. All that concerns us at the present moment is to realize that Germany was exercising the supreme function of the State in seeking to lead the national mind; and to avoid concluding that because it led its mind in a wrong direction the mind of the nation is not to be led by the State at all. The argument sometimes heard, that because education may be bad, and is open to a bad use, it is therefore always and in itself bad, deserves not an answer, but contempt. Every gift is capable of misuse.

The truth is that the State cannot altogether avoid educating its people. It may do it well or ill. Every State, as an individual agent, must have some aim, that is, some notion of a common good; and it cannot divest itself of the responsibility of inducing its adoption as an end to be realized by its citizens. This is, it seems to me, the ultimate object of its laws and of its practical application of them in every sphere. It has to 'hinder hindrances,' we are truly told; but that does not make its activities negative or reduce its function to that of providing *outward* deterrents. We may call the removal of ignorance a negative operation, no doubt, and regard ignorance, quite rightly, and especially ignorance of the good, as the most obstinate of hindrances, but that does not make education a negative process. Nor does it follow that the State should confine its care for education to the provision of institutions and the monetary means of maintaining them. It is even possible that of all things, what is most important to the State is that in educating its citizens it should educate them *morally*, in the sense of

directing the mind of the people not to a false but to a true good.

The view that the State's action must be preventive—that while morality may command, law can only prohibit—

and that its instrument for preventing is force, more or less disguised, springs, I believe, from the fact that no better way is possible for States and citizens so long as their moral development

is low. The means and method vary as national character grows, though its aim is always to influence the minds of the citizens in the direction of 'the good,' or of what is taken to be 'the good.' A rudimentary teacher, dealing with rudimentary material, must employ means which imply force: that is, he must 'bribe or punish.' The more or less direct resort to rewards or punishment is necessitated by the fact that it is the good or evil which rewards and punishment can bring that is intelligible to the agents or has any force of appeal. And the good or evil first comprehended and valued is physical good or evil: that is to say, the good and evil which fall within the province of 'force.' I admit readily that the wiser the parent the more rare and reluctant his resort to force of this kind; but I think that his will must take, to begin with, the character in the eyes of the child, of a forcible obstacle to its own self-will. When the child's action is affected by the pain or pleasure which it gives to his parents, motives which can be called moral have begun to play. And, throughout, in the degree to which moralization takes place, not only do the rewards and punishment change their character, but all force, however disguised, gives place to suasion. Not only does punishment become less physical and rewards less gross, but they cease to count. In the end nothing counts except the goodness of the action, that is, of the action in all its

compass, taking in the intention, motive, and consequence, and all these measured in other terms than those of egoism.

Moreover, *pari passu* with the displacement of the motives of force by those of suasion, prohibition gives way to positive commands ; “ Thou shalt not ” to “ Thou shalt.” What is more, commands give way to ideals, obedience becomes aspiration, the outward law becomes an inner desire and its observance happiness. Lastly, by the same process, the agent’s actions shed their discreteness and particularity and contingency. He is guided more and more by principles, and less and less by rules ; and principles are universals—*universals*, not generalizations ; things which give their character to particulars, and not samenesses drawn from particulars by the empty method of omitting their differences. In this way the moral life becomes systematic, a living coherent whole, whose unity deepens and comprehends more and wider elements at every step. Then at last character becomes a thing of beauty. We are told that “ One of the Scribes came,” and asked “ Which is the first commandment ? ” Jesus answered that it was “ Love ” ; and that the second is ‘ like unto it ’ ; it also was “ Love.” The whole transition and transmutation from law to principle is illuminated in this simple and supreme instance.

Another cause which has contributed to the view so generally held that the methods of the State must be prohibitive and imply force, is our tendency to convert distinctions into mutually excluding differences. We change distinctions and aspects within a whole into independent and conflicting elements. We place methods of force in one class and methods of suasion in another. But does it not follow from what has been said, and is it not true, that methods of force *are* methods of suasion, and that methods of suasion are methods of force ? The ultimate

object sought by both methods alike is to change at least the intention of the agent and his external act. The force is intended to persuade, and persuasion is often complete compulsion. Whether the schoolmaster flogs or reasons with a bad boy, what he wants to reach is his mind : he has a choice of avenues, but he has only one goal. His object is to induce him to will to do, or not to do, certain actions.

Again, it is not true, or ought not to be true, that the sole aim of the teacher when he punishes is to change the intention and the outward act of the learner, leaving the motive unaffected. As a matter of fact he cannot bring about a change of intention without affecting the motive ; motive and intention cannot be separated in this way. We are told that ' an action performed under compulsion is no part of the will.' I should rather say that a new circumstance has been introduced, namely, the punishment or coercion, and that the agent, taking account of that circumstance, intends a different act from before, and from a different motive. Volition has always reference to circumstance, and the act done in view of threats or rewards is a different act whether the agent yields to the threat or not. What an agent intends to do he wills to do, and his action is determined by his motive. Whether or not the State can take cognizance of the motive when it employs coercion, it cannot avoid affecting the motive, the intention, and the act. And, as a matter of fact, the State does take cognizance of motives, sometimes in its laws, more often in its application of the laws in its executive courts, mitigating their rigidity and calling the process ' equity.' If a man kills his daughter to save her from a worse fate—as from falling into the hands of the enemy—his motive should and will count. The educative efforts of the State, through its laws and its executive,

would be endlessly reiterative, and secure no progress, if they affected the intention and not the motives. We cannot too often or too persistently remind ourselves that the distinctions of the psychologists are dangerous tools to handle, and that the whole man enters into and is involved in all that he thinks and does.

Even the distinction between what is within and what is without will not stand ultimate pressure. The State cannot confine its interference to that which is external, as we have already seen; for while every influence is 'external' at first, whether it be Distinction
of external
and internal. force or guile or the sweetest suasion, it ceases to be external the moment it affects either the intention or the motive. The State, like the individual, can no more avoid affecting the lives of its citizens—the inner life—than the individual can avoid being 'an example,' or the sun shine without throwing out its rays. And no influence is an influence so long as it is only outside. We have seen already that the man is his world; that the distinction between what is within and what is without is a distinction for, or 'within,' consciousness: that the self as subjective is exclusive, and as objective is comprehensive, and that it is *always* both at once. Empty a man of his world and he has no self: and a world that is not a world *for* a self is as good as nothing. Self and content, 'inner and outer,' are absolutely inseparable aspects of one reality; and to convert aspects into entities more or less self-existing is always a mischievous error—possibly the only theoretical error we do commit, namely, that of thinking 'abstractly.'

On all these grounds I am forced to the conclusion that the functions of the State cannot be determined on the grounds suggested in current political philosophy. That "the effectual action of the State, *i.e.* of the com-

munity as acting through law, for the promotion of habits of true citizenship, seems necessarily confined to the removal of obstacles" ¹ is true; but there is no kind of positive aim which may not, in a similar way, be negatively represented as the removal of an obstacle. The definition does not *limit*; and at the same time it suggests what is not true, namely, that positive action on the part of the State encroaches upon the spontaneity of the citizen, and is therefore antagonistic to morality. That moral action must be spontaneous is certain, and "whatever interferes with the spontaneous action of social interests" is inimical to the well-being and violates the nature of both the State and the individual. But it does not follow that "any direct enforcement of the outward conduct, which ought to follow from social interests, by means of threatened penalties—and a law requiring such conduct necessarily implies penalties for disobedience to it—does interfere with the spontaneous action of these interests, and consequently check the growth of the capacity which is the condition of the beneficial exercise of rights." ² When the State made elementary education compulsory, I do not think that the interest of those who already prized education was lessened. Must a man cease to entertain charitable motives towards hospitals if he is taxed to support them: or may not the tax be gladly paid? It seems to me that where a social good is spontaneously sought, the imperatives of the State and the punishments they imply are simply of no consequence. There is no invasion of spontaneity. The endorsement by the State of the interest already active is for the good citizen either a matter of no importance and does not affect his motive, or it strengthens it. Man's duty has been

¹Green, *Principles of Political Obligation*, p. 514-5.

²*Ibid.* p. 514.

defined as "doing good to others, in obedience to the will of God, for the sake of eternal happiness." The good man pays no attention to the last clause. It has no more meaning to him than if it ran "for the sake of making a circle square." It is, in fact, self-contradictory; for it implies that the supreme good, namely, the doing of duty, is a secondary good—a means to eternal happiness.

The view that legislation interferes with spontaneity suggests that law and liberty are, as Mill believed, mutually inconsistent and exclusive; that the sphere of spontaneity is one and that of State authority is another: the more liberty the less law, the

Relation of
law and
liberty.

more law the less liberty. From this point of view Mill proposed to "assign to individuality the part of life in which it is chiefly the individual that is interested; to society, the part which chiefly interests society." It cannot be done. There are no personal interests which are not also either immediately or remotely social, and no social interests which are not personal. In illustration of his view Mill says, "No person ought to be punished for being drunk; but a soldier or policeman should be punished for being drunk on duty. Wherever, in short, there is a definite damage, or a definite risk of damage either to an individual or to the public, the case is taken out of the province of liberty, and placed in that of law." 'Liberty' here evidently means that men may freely live as badly as they please: it is the rights of caprice which Mill defends. But liberty and caprice are incompatible—caprice is chance and lawlessness, and action from chance and without respect to any law within or without is, we know, the worst slavery—if, indeed, it is possible at all.

No doubt the State, taken in the strict sense of the legislative and judicial power, will distinguish, as Mill suggests,

between the drunkenness of the policeman in the privacy of his home and on duty ; but it cannot distinguish on the ground which he suggests. It refrains from interference in the first case on account of the difficulties which it would meet, and the social wrongs and inconveniences it would occasion, if it tried to execute its decrees. On the other hand, if, as Mill states, the State may punish any action which damages or runs the risk of damaging either an individual or the public, there is on his assumption no room at all left for liberty. There is no wrong of any kind which does not damage either the individual or the State : in the last resort every wrong action damages both. And if the State be taken in the more concrete and true sense of being the organized will of society to the common good, the State *does* take account of the policeman who gets drunk in the privacy of his own home if, that is to say, it comes to know of him. It will feel less secure of his conduct when he is on duty, and be slow to promote him. By being drunk he has damaged his personality and thereby wronged the State.

It is no longer necessary to dwell at any length on the fact that the antithesis suggested between law and liberty is false. Political thought has progressed since the time of Mill. It is now generally known that there can be no liberty where there is no law, and I have tried to show that Liberty implies more than absence of constraint, and does not 'lie in a sort of inner self enclosed as it were in an impervious globe.' It implies a will that escapes beyond the confines of the inner self and produces an outward change corresponding to its aims : a free will is power, as we say, to carry out ideas. An isolated will could not act at all, and a will related to a chaotic outer world, whether social or natural, could not act rationally. Objects, whether social

or natural, have an intrinsic character which the will must respect in dealing with them, if it is to elicit their values and make them instruments of its purpose. Consequently, to fence the will round against the impact of social forces were to destroy the possibility of interaction between the self and society. And a consistent individualism must be nihilism. On the other hand, as already shown, the power of the self and the meaning of the world grow together, and their interpenetration becomes the more complete. The will that is free, conceiving its own purposes and carrying them out, converts its world from being an apparent obstacle into its confederate. It comprehends and adopts the laws of the good life, and, as we have seen, "in their service finds perfect freedom."¹ It ought to be self-evident that where there are no laws there can be no obligations or no duties, and the moral life cannot even begin; while, on the other hand, as a man's effective will expands, duties take an ever wider range and bind ever more closely. Their authority is complete when the law without becomes the law within, and its fulfilment the supreme object of desire. The antithesis of law and liberty, in a word, is another instance of the separation of aspects of a concrete reality, and the hypostasization of abstractions.

Now the question arises, what method remains, other than those which we have rejected, for determining the functions of the State? If the action of the State cannot be merely negative, and cannot be confined to the external conditions of its citizens' lives, but must enter within; if it does not stop at the outward act and the mere intention but affects the motive and penetrates the self and becomes

Is, then, the State's right of interference absolute?

¹ See the author's *Idealism as a Practical Creed*, pp. 105-126.

a living part of its structure—as, by their recoil on character, all knowledge of objects and all dealing with them must become, does it not follow that there is nothing with which the State may not ‘interfere’? Is the ideal of the State that of administrative absolutism?

By no means. There is a principle which will limit and also guide the action of the State in its relation to its citizens: and it is the only limit which the State ought to recognize. It is that which is imposed upon it by its own end, or supreme purpose. No free agent can be bound by anything except its own ends: and to be bound by those is to be free; for the true end and the true nature of an agent, as of any living thing, are one and the same. We have insisted that it attains its nature in attaining its end; that the process of attaining its end is the process of its self-realization. Now, the end of the State, as we have seen, is ‘to make of human nature in its citizens all that it has in it to become,’—‘the fullest development in them of the forces and faculties of man.’ In pursuit of this purpose it may say both “Do” and “Do not,” and take surveillance of the external conditions of life. Moreover, it may and ought to exercise authority over the external conditions of the life of its members *with the view of* changing not only their outward actions and intentions but their motives and character. It must *aim* at ‘forming their minds,’ according to the usual misleading but well-intentioned phrase; for the development of faculties, or true education, means nothing else.

But, it will be said, the individual must resent, as the last indignity, having his mind fashioned by the State, or by any external power. There is no other wrong that the State can perpetrate so grave or so far-reaching in its consequences: it is the worst, because it is the most complete enslavement.

He who shapes my mind, directs my will : I am no longer a person, and have no self : I am a thing.

What answer shall we make ? It is implied in the definition of the end of the State and in a truer view of education. The State exists in order to "develop in its citizens the forces and faculties of man" : but to 'fashion' or 'mould' or 'form' is not to develop, and it is not well to be misled by metaphors. To develop is not to subdue : it is the very opposite. It is to set free latent possibilities in the individual and to elicit his activities. The effect of education, if it is true education, is to enlighten the mind, so that it apprehends wider and wiser purposes, which is the way to freedom. If the State employs compulsion it must employ it as a means to the development which makes for liberty ; and compulsion may be justified as such means, but not otherwise. It must strengthen the personality of its citizens, make for their rational independence—an independence which is not negative but affirmative, not the independence of a will at war with the world, but that of a will that apprehends and employs its forces, and in that sense 'overcomes' the world.

Moreover, and this is a matter of cardinal importance, the true education of the citizen, the education which is best for him and also for the State, is that which educates him *for his own sake* ; and not for any ulterior purpose. It must terminate in him. "The individual himself must be the sole end of the whole process. Ulterior considerations should have no more place in the schemes of the educator, whether he be an individual or the State, than in the mind of the mother when she suckles her infant at her breast. There is only one kind of school which gains a sensible man's entire trust—it is that in which the lessons, the games, the societies, the whole training, whether

vocational or other, is meant to terminate and reach its final goal in the boys and girls themselves.”¹

The State can do nothing well if it cares not for character ; and it can only destroy or pervert it by making it a mere means for the attainment of a good which it does not recognize as the good of the learner. States have committed both blunders and have been guilty of both wrongs. They have not recognized it as their duty to aim at developing in their citizens ‘ the forces and faculties of man.’ In our own country “ A hundred years ago it was commonly said that the mass of the people did not need any education at all. Forty years ago it was sufficient to teach the children of the workers to the age of ten. Twenty years ago we were told that it was enough if they stayed at school till twelve or thirteen.”² England has been slow to recognize its national responsibility in this supreme matter, and its recognition even yet is rudimentary and intermittent. Nor has our country been guiltless of endeavouring to educate its citizens for other ends than their own good. It is not necessary to go into the past to hear the education of the workers’ children advocated on the ground that they will be more effective means of making money to their employers. I confess with shame that where our education has not been haphazard it has often been perverted, with the most disastrous results. Instead of emancipating it has enslaved, and instead of being the most powerful instrument of personal and national well-being it has, like every great talent misused, been a weapon for mischief.

I need hardly repeat that the supreme example of this error and crime against its citizens has been furnished by

¹ See “ The Education of the Citizen,” *The Round Table*, June, 1917.

² *Ibid.*

Germany, which deliberately and systematically educated them, not for their own sakes, but "to promote the efficiency of the State." It has treated their personality with as little respect for the many years during which it prepared for war, as it has done in the battlefields; and its people have submitted to being reduced into mere means of a tyrannic power. But its error was not due to its 'intellectualism,' as we say: it was due to ignorance—ignorance of what is best worth knowing, namely, the secret and ultimate essence of national well-being, that is, devotion to the moral good of its members. "It is difficult to determine what policy could show less insight than that of using man as means, as the German State has done, unless it be that of setting up a State conceived in terms of physical force, as possessing an unqualified and unconditional right to his service and his life."¹ Had Germany valued research in the domain of morals as it has valued it in that of industry and militarism, and sought the good of the State by the way of the good of its citizens, it would have found the powers of the world, not against it, but at its back. But its moral confusion was too deep: it believed too implicitly, and instilled its belief too thoroughly into the minds of its members, that "All ethical considerations are alien to the State, and that the State must, therefore, resolutely keep them at arm's length." It knew that "what occupies the mind enters into conduct, just as that which is near the heart invades the intelligence"; it knew also "that what enters into conduct fashions fate." But it did not know that the fate of both men and nations is their moral character.

It ought to be more manifest, and more consistently kept in mind even by ourselves, that moral character cannot

¹ *Ibid.*

truth, and fostering their power to form for themselves beliefs which are true. Within the limits of this, the ultimate end of the State, I am not able to see that there is anything which the State may not do, or any department of man's life, however private, into which its entrance would be an invasion and interference. On the other hand the State that is loyal to this end will wisely refrain in many ways from 'interfering' with its citizens.

"God's all, man's nought," says Browning.

"But also, God, whose pleasure brought
 Man into being, stands away
 As it were a handbreadth off, to give
 Room for the newly-made to live,
 And look at him from a place apart,
 And use his gifts of brain and heart,
 Given, indeed, but to keep for ever.
 Who speaks of man, then, must not sever
 Man's very elements from man,
 Saying, "But all is God's;"—whose plan
 Was to create man and then leave him
 Able, his own word saith, to grieve him,
 But able to glorify him too,
 As a mere machine could never do,
 That prayed or praised, all unaware
 Of its fitness for aught but praise and prayer,
 Made perfect as a thing of course."

The good State is like a good gardener, who secures for his plants the best soil and the best exposure for sunshine, air, and rain, and who then waits—not fashioning nor forming flower or fruit, but eliciting the activities of the life which bursts into them. His aim limits his meddling.

In the next chapter I shall enquire into the nature of the limits imposed upon the State by its end and function.

CHAPTER VI

THE RIGHTS OF THE STATE AND ITS DUTIES IN RELATION TO CERTAIN ACTIVITIES OF NATIONAL LIFE

ASSUMING that the function of the State is to secure and maintain for its citizens the conditions most favourable to the full exercise, and thereby the full development, of their best powers, we have now to enquire what it ought and what it ought not to attempt to do for them. We have to employ as a criterion of the things which it ought and ought not to enforce our conception of the end of the State as "the good life." It is a very wide question, and we can only touch its margin.

The obligations of the State. In the first place, inasmuch as the State can operate only through its members and is their corporate will, the question what it ought or ought not to do turns into the question what its citizens can demand that it should do for them—or what claims they have upon it. In other words, the obligations or duties of the State are the same as the rights of its citizens. What the State ought to do is what its citizens have a right to demand. Rights and duties not only imply one another, so that there are no rights where there are no duties, nor any duties except where there are rights, but, as I have already said, they are the same facts looked at from opposite points of view. The right of A against B is the duty of B to A. I shall not

try to elaborate this truth : I do not see how it can be disputed.

In the next place, I should like to recall the principle that rights are not merely claims : they are claims and something more. Every right is a claim, but a man may claim much beyond, and many things other than, his rights. Claims are every day disputed on the ground that they are not rights. The State, in its law courts, recognizes and ratifies, or repudiates and resists claims according as they are held by it to be, or not to be, rights. A citizen has no legal rights except those which the State recognizes, and it is the recognition by the State that converts the claim into such a right. But the State is not the only power that lifts claims into rights, nor are legal rights the only rights. There are others, both higher and lower. What I wish to make clear at present is that whenever any claim is made or disputed on the ground that it is or is not a right, the disputants appeal to an authority which is superior to their several wills, and which is rational. Even when they invoke no court of law, but seek to convince one another by argument, they lay aside the method of force, and appeal to a higher authority. Each appeals from the reasoning of his opponent to a better reasoner, and the reasoner to which both appeal is the same one—it is a reasoner supposed not to err. It is universal reason. This appeal to universal reason is implicit in all human life from the lowest to the highest. It is operative in the disputes of children over their games, and of savages sitting in a circle and handing round the pipe of peace ; and the high court of Parliament can, at best, employ only the same instrument more thoroughly. But the universal and final arbitrator standing above the disputants has its witness in the disputants—otherwise no appeal could be

made to it. In other words the higher reason is the *better* reason that is assumed to be in each of them: its will is their own true will: the good it declares to be good is assumed to be their true good.

Thus, the very conception of right implies at once the personal or private, and the social or universal character of individuality. It convicts 'Individualism' of a fundamental error. The doctrine that "Man," that is, each man in his singularity and exclusive individuality, "is the measure of all things," is repudiated whenever a man affirms or denies a right. He is a 'measure of what is right or wrong, true or false,' only in so far as he speaks in the name of a reason which is universal. Apart from this his findings have no authority either for him or for any one else.

And this is true of the authority of the State. That is to say, the State has no authority, it cannot decide what is **The appeal to reason.** or what is not for its citizens a right, except on the assumption that it also speaks in a name that is higher than its own. It can lift claims into legal rights by the bare assertion of its will. But *merely* legal rights are not true rights, because they are based on force. Rights based on force challenge an opposing force. They compel but do not bind. The State cannot lift claims into rights in the full sense of the term, it cannot make them absolute and categorically binding except in so far as it arbitrates in accordance with universal reason, and therefore with 'the nature of things.' Its authority also is derivative: and it also speaks in the name of a still higher power.

Now, such far-reaching consequences follow from these apparently simple facts that I am tempted to dwell upon them a little further, even at the risk of repetition. They

imply and show that except within society, as members of it and therefore as members of one another, men have no rights, nor, in consequence, any duties. And if they are members of society and of one another they are more than exclusive individuals, or, in other words, their own nature is universal. Hence a capricious will or a will that claims to act as it pleases, irrespective of any rule except its own pleasure, is not the will of a rational being, or, in fact, a will at all. It is only another name for chaos. A man, therefore, is not true to himself in so far as he is capricious. He betrays his own nature and that of society at the same time. On the other hand, when he respects his own nature as social as well as individual, he acts by reference to a law that is common, and, in fact, universal in the sense of being binding, obligatory and final.

But final obligatoriness is not attributed to the laws of any society or State unless their universality extends beyond the society or State. Caprice on the part of States falls under the same condemnation, and into the same contradictions, as caprice on the part of the individual. It can claim no genuine rights and confer none. When the citizen bows to the decisions of a State which he regards as capricious he bows to mere force ; and the State which bases its authority on its bare will rules by force. It therefore does not act in accordance with its own nature nor with that of its members, but violates both ; and it does not fulfil its function of ruling the citizens through the medium of their own will. It does not respect their freedom nor humanity, but treats them as things. It does not seek their ' Good,' but denies them the conditions under which alone they can be good. It frustrates instead of ' developing their capacity,' for it can be realized only by the exercise of their freedom.

In all these ways it is evident that rights imply morality. They are rooted in the conception of a good which is absolute both for States and individuals—absolute in the sense that its value lies wholly in itself or is dependent on nothing beyond itself; that it is complete and cannot be made better in quality, or added to and made more comprehensive; and that its authority is not only unconditional but universal, the good of all rational beings, and therefore the final truth and essence of their nature. There are no rights or duties which are not ultimately derivable from that conception, that is, there are no rights or duties which are not moral.

A further consequence follows, one whose truth is less obvious: namely, that only moral beings can have either rights or duties; and that the range of their rights and duties corresponds to their moral attainments and worth. This is a hard saying, and it may be challenged. Let us look at the possible objections. What of the rights of animals, or of human beings in their state of innocence—the rights of children? Has the domestic animal no right to be kindly used, and has not every living thing a right not to be ill-treated? The question cannot be answered with a simple and unqualified Yes, or No. It depends on the view that we should take of animals: are they merely natural or irrational beings—things; or do they, in virtue of being sensitive and of having what we call ‘animal intelligence,’ possess ‘a rude outline of a soul’? Not that even on the first view, as merely natural objects, they are entirely devoid of rights. Man must have regard to the nature of purely material things in his dealing with them, if he is to act rationally. He must not try to grow grapes from thistles. Consideration

Rights and
duties as co-
existent
with moral
attainment.

of, and even for, the nature of things, is an essential character of reason : it even *respects* their nature. But *its* respect for them, or *their* rights against it, are derivative and secondary. Rights do not reside in the objects, or animals themselves. Man owes it to himself not to put natural objects to a *wanton* use. But he *can* use them. They are means and not ends in themselves. He can put animals to death and even subject them to pain in the interests of what *is* an end in itself, as we assume humanity to be. To assume that animals have rights in themselves as *mere* animals, or as irrational, is not only to extend the range of rights beyond the range of personality, but also to limit man's use of natural facts : and that is a wrong to the natural fact. It is in their relation to man as a rational and moral being, it is as contributive to his ends, that natural facts attain their fullest meaning and value. As it is the soul of music in man that lifts the silent waves of the ether into the marvel of the most sublime of the arts, or as the primrose is yellow, and more than a yellow primrose to the poet, moving him to 'thoughts too deep for tears,' so is it, in its way and degree, with every 'brute' fact that becomes the content of man's thoughts and means to his ends. "I am here to help" is the constant cry of Nature and all her forces. "Use me," she says to man, "consistently with thine own best ends. I am the instrument of reason." If man looks to himself, he will not wrong animals.

The question is simpler if we take the higher view of animals and regard them as quasi-rational, or, with Comte, as participants in humanity. They are then, in their degree and within their limits, ends in themselves and have rights on their own account. Such rights we attribute to children. They are potentially moral beings, and must be dealt with as such. In a sense their rights spring

not from what they are, but from what they are capable of becoming. They are prospective rights. But they are not prospective in the sense that they may be postponed. Children have rights in the present, but they are rights of a particular kind and degree determined from the point of view of what it is in them to become. They are rights to that which contributes to their growth.

We may amend our statement and say that, in determining what the rights of a child are, we must take him *as he is* in the full sense ; and what he is is a being with possibilities in the present which make for actualization in the future. That in the history of a child there is a stage we conveniently call the stage of innocence, when it can do neither right nor wrong and is neither good nor bad in a moral sense, having no rights which *he* can claim or duties which he can perform, is undeniable ; but the stage of innocence should not be taken as a *static* fact. The plant has not yet blossomed, but the gardener in dealing with it treats it, accords rights to it, from the point of view of its blossoming. Children, in one word, have an intrinsic and inalienable right to be educated. The State is bound to provide them with the opportunities of developing their faculties ; for *that*, we must assume, is the minimum of meaning which can be attached to the State's care for ' the good life.'

Now, I wish to universalize this truth, for I think it is applicable to the rights of men as well as of children. Static categories are wrong and misleading in all human matters. The State must never refuse to accord present rights except with a view to the future : it must never limit them to the *mere* present. The mere present is never the *true* present where man is concerned ; for he is always in the making. What he *can* become, his end, is his true self and full nature, attained perhaps never, but always attaining

always operative, always determining what he verily is and does in the moment. For the State to arbitrate on a citizen's right from a static point of view is to deal with man as he never is. In its decisions it employs a criterion which misleads. This is a cardinal principle of wise statesmanship, and when Great Britain deals with India, or with any undeveloped nationality, it cannot keep it too constantly in view.

The error that lies at the root of the discussion as to so-called 'natural rights,' and which stultifies every attempt to define them, springs from this use of a static category, and the error is instructive. The fallacy of natural rights. It has been maintained that man is born free, that he has, *wie er steht und geht*, indefeasible and inalienable rights against the State. The State has not granted them, and it cannot take them away. Man springs into being fully armed with these rights, like Minerva from the head of Jove. If he enters into, or becomes a member of, society there are certain rights he must give away, substituting in regard to them a higher will than his own arbitrary will, giving away the right 'to live as badly as he pleases.' "He exchanges," as Green said in criticising the doctrine of natural rights, "the natural liberty to do and get what he can, a liberty limited by his relative strength, for a liberty at once limited and secured by the general will of Society." But his natural rights, it was assumed, he cannot give away, nor barter, nor can the State accept them. Any bargain as to these goes for nothing. To determine what these inalienable rights are, that is, to determine the limits of the rights of the State over its citizens, has been in the past the prime concern of the political theorist and legislator. And many definitions have been offered. The Virginian Bill of Rights, which America adopted when

declaring its independence, affirmed "That all men by nature are equally free and independent, and have certain inherent rights, of which when they enter into a state of society, they cannot by any compact deprive or divest their posterity, namely the enjoyment of life and liberty, with the means of acquiring and possessing property, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety." The State has not instituted these rights, and yet it must respect them. As natural they were held to be superior to the State and independent of it. They are individual and not social. They define a territory into which the State must not intrude.

Now, the object of a definition is to define : that is to say, to fix limits—one of the objections to all definitions, we may remark in passing. What then, according to this definition, are the limits of the State's interference ? What does it recognize or grant, and what must it refuse to recognize or grant ? The answer, I believe, is, Everything and Nothing : everything from one point of view and nothing from another. And both answers alike are void of all practical value, and can give no guidance to the legislator. Having admitted the right to liberty, we must ask, liberty to do what ? For the value of a right depends upon the range of its exercise, and the purpose for which it is used. Is it meant that the natural right to life and liberty, which the State must treat as the inalienable possession of every one of its members, as he stands, is his right freely to live in any senseless way he pleases ? If so, what control is the State supposed to exercise ? How can it exercise any control ? The definition gives no help to the answering of the first question, and there is no answer to the second which does not contradict the assumption on which it is asked. We are told again that the right to the means of

acquiring and possessing property is inalienable. But if we ask how much means, and under what conditions, we are once more left without any guidance. To admit that the right is sacred in the sense of being unlimited is to go back to the pre- and anti-social condition described by Hobbes. The State cannot both acquiesce in it and survive: everybody's hand on such a view is rightly raised against everybody, which is equivalent to saying that there are no rights, only force, and no right as opposed to wrong. What justifies everything justifies nothing; and *vice versâ*. The State swings between the opposite poles of absolute impotence and absolute sovereignty.

Moreover, the rights which are represented as natural are supposed to belong to man independently of society: he has them before and apart from his becoming a member of society. But who is he and what can he be or do apart from society? We have seen already that he is a being without a self and without the power of becoming a self. There is a long history, the strains of a very long and varied parentage, a vast social inheritance in the child when he is born into the world; and he grows with his world. "When he can separate himself from it"—as a self to be given or denied rights—"and know himself apart from it, then by that time his self . . . is penetrated, infected, characterised by the existence of others." In a word, the self to which such natural rights are assigned is a pure fiction of the imagination and an impossible being.

The history of the doctrine of natural rights is one continuous exposure of its contradictions. The "State of Nature," as Green shows, is in truth the negation of the political State. If there were such a thing, no pact or agreement, by which it was held a State arose, could be

made. To make a contract would involve the giving away of rights, and of rights that are inalienable. Not to make a contract, or not to recognize a common authority as anterior and superior to the separate rights would mean rights that are not recognized and therefore are not rights. In one word, it would be a state of war out of which no emergence is possible. The theory does not limit the authority of the State, it annihilates it: and it does so without according any *rights* to any individual.

Nevertheless, that the human being, as human, has rights cannot be denied. They are innate, and they are inalienable, and their ground is in the man himself. They are intrinsic. But they are in him as a social being. They belong to him in virtue of the recognition of a common good by the community in which and by which he lives a more or less rational life; and they are the more fully his, the more inalienable and comprehensive, the wider and the fuller the content of that common good. The rights are valid and genuine in the degree to which the citizen, on his part, exercises them in such a way as to develop his best powers with a view to, and therefore in the service of, the common good. The aim of the individual and the State is thus one and the same. The State provides the opportunities, the citizens use these opportunities. To provide the former is the duty of the State and the right of the citizen; to provide the latter, the use, is the duty of the citizen and the right of the State. As the common good is the good of both the State and the individual citizen, both the State and the citizen are ends in themselves. The process of attaining the good is the process of self-determination. Both State and citizen are in its service, but its service is not a foreign service. Their obligation is a privilege. Their

rights imply their sovereignty, and their duties imply that they are subjects.

In order to determine whether the State should affirm or deny a demand that a citizen makes as his right, and in order to determine what the citizen should or should not claim as a right from the State, ^{The criterion of rights.}

or, in a word, to determine their respective limits, we have to ask one question—Does it or does it not make for the common good? But we may ask that question in either of two ways: Does the granting or the refusal of the citizen's claims make for the development of the humanity of the citizen—his good; or does it make for the unity, solidarity, power and comprehensiveness of the life of the State? And it is the “*making for*” which must be accentuated. Legislation and the administration of the laws must deal with the present by reference to the future which is implicit in it. Even ‘punishment’ by the State must not have its eyes fixed simply on the past. Such is the criterion, we maintain, by reference to which the respective rights of the State and citizen must be determined. We must now attempt to apply that criterion to some alleged rights, in order to illustrate and test its practical value.

The principle which I believe to be true, and which we have to put to the test is, put as pointedly as I can, That the State may do *anything* that makes for the good life of its citizens, and nothing else; and that the citizen may claim anything that makes for that same good life, and nothing else—always bearing in mind that the good life is a common good, the well-being at once of the individual citizen and of the State. This means, as regards the State, that its action is not limited to dealing with the external conditions of life, as has been alleged; nor to negation and prohibition. For the sake of clearness it may be well to

say a few words more on these two points. As we have seen, it is not possible for anyone, in one sense, to touch anything but the outward conditions of the moral life of another person. The forces of nature and of society can only play around and beat upon the outworks of character : the gates of the castle can be opened only from within.

Applications of it (1) to the view that the functions of the State are limited. All life, from that of the moss growing in the crannied wall to that of the most sovereign manhood, at once holds the world off at arm's length and makes use of it. But this consideration of itself must not limit the activities of the State, so that it should stint its 'interference.' On the contrary, the State must have the bearing of its actions upon character—as calling forth its powers—continually in view, and having that in view as the end it may do *anything*. In contravention of that end it can do *nothing*. Can it teach morality, it may be asked, and religion ? I should answer that it can and ought to do so, always provided that it does so with a view to fostering the moral and religious spirit. This implies that it can teach definite moral and religious doctrines, affirming some and refuting others. It is not possible to teach otherwise. What, then, it may be asked, of moral and religious freedom. Is religious persecution to be revived, and the religious 'toleration' which the world has bought at such a price to be given up ? By no means, I would reply ; nor do these things follow from what has been said. For teaching is not dogmatizing, or filling the mind with doctrine. To teach is to incite the activities of the mind, by means of the truth. The right to teach is not a right to teach what is false, nor the right to enslave the mind. It is the right and the duty and the privilege of fostering in the individual the spirit of truth. And the spirit of truth is a spirit of criticism and reaction, but not

of *empty* criticism and negation. It is a spirit which finds that truths grow, and that great principles in the degree in which they reveal their content, are like moral principles, in perpetual process of self-criticism and re-creation : for the law that life dies to live is universal.

It is possible, nay it is probable, that the State—which is not a secular thing nor an instrument of merely secular purposes—may find that its best way of teaching so as *to foster* the spirit of religion is to refrain from interfering *as a State*. But that is a question not of the rightness or wrongness of the end, but of the method of attaining it, or of the choice of instrument. It is a question not of principle but of means ; and the means may and must vary. The same principle may remain and guide the State whether, like the wise parent, it prohibits, inculcates, insists, positively interferes, or simply stands in the background and waits. The evolution of the true life may inspire both methods, and each, in its own place, is the better. The important matter is that the positive principle and aim should be kept steadily in view, namely, that of bringing out the best powers of the citizen. Can this be done if the State is not to have positive regard for religion ? *Is not religion inspired morality, and the strengthening sense of constant victory at the heart of every passing defeat ?*

The view that the activities of the State as law-giver should be negative rather than positive, or that its mission is to prevent the bad life rather than to promote the good deserves, I think, less consideration than the view we have just criticised. Affirmation and negation, prohibition and permission imply one another. To do is to refrain, and to refrain is to do. I do not think that in this direction any

(2) To the view that the functions of the State are negative.

guiding principle of State action can emerge. A law that may be negative as to one man, say, a member of a 'privileged' class, may be positive as regards another. The provision of old-age pensions, for instance, or, in fact, taxation generally, both confers and takes away. The limitation of 'the rights of property' or of freedom of contract has the same two-sided character, and may be regarded now as positive now as negative.

On the other hand, if the limitations of the right of the State must be considered from such a point of view, I should say that they are ultimately to be determined positively. What it does, even when it prohibits and by implication threatens punishment, it does in view of attaining a positive good. The negative aspect is the more apparent, for it is on the surface; but it has only contingent and dependent validity. And, as a matter of fact, the positive function of the State is becoming more and more prominent as civilization grows, and the range of its exercise is extending. The negative point of view will not disclose the full value of recent or prospective legislation, say, as to "better housing." We may, if we so please, represent it as a means of preventing disease and crime; but it is much more. It promises a positive addition to the well-being of the whole community, and of the members of it who will neither die of a contagious disease nor become criminals. The provision of better houses for the poor is for the community an endowment of opportunities capable of manifold use and of the most varied good consequences. And in this, and other cases, the State and the citizens will both gain from maintaining steadily in view the positive good, and also the positive duty of aiming at it.

But it is time that we should deal directly with the value of the criterion of State action which we deem better than

that supplied by the conception that it should be confined to what is external and negative. That criterion is the positive promotion of the good life—that is, of the moral life of the citizens ; the dealing with circumstances from that point of view and with that conscious object.

Positive
application
of the
criterion.

In the first place, it is essential that the test of the criterion should be crucial. We should be making the answering of our problem too easy if we tested it by reference to a doubtful individual right, or proceeded on the principle that the State may injure the few for the sake of securing some good for the many. We are asserting that the function of the State is to promote the highest, that is the moral, good of *every one of its citizens*, and that always and in all circumstances.

In the second place, the moral good is to be understood in its most comprehensive sense, not merely as a part of the good life, but as the whole of it. I admit, as Mr. Bradley urges, that “to discover or re-discover truth, and to make or re-make beauty, are certainly elements in the best life” ; and that “truth and beauty are not morality nor mere means to it ; they have an intrinsic value of their own.” But it must not be assumed that the spheres of morality, truth, and beauty are separate. Ideal spiritual ends *include one another* in a way that is impossible for material or natural kinds of good. Any one of them may be means to the others ; none can be mere means. Any one of them furnishes a point of view from which the whole of reality may be contemplated. Truth, beauty, and goodness are, I believe, each the more perfect the more all of them are found together, at their highest, and characterizing the *same* facts. Moral goodness is the fullest exhibition of the truth and beauty of what is real. We do not know

the full truth even of natural objects except in relation to the highest use which can be made of them, namely, the moral use. And so far as I can see, it is in the life of man at its best, in human nature in the full exercise of its highest powers in promoting the good or resisting evil, that fine art, at least that of literature, finds its fullest opportunity. The bearing of this truth is not so evident in the other arts, but I do not know that there is in them anything that contradicts it. Relative values are very difficult either to deny or to establish amongst works of art; inasmuch as each work of art must have *its own* unique perfection. And it does not depend for its character or value on its relations, as particular truths do, or particular moral acts. A work of art is not a work of art at all unless it is, if I may say so, a world in itself, a self-determining infinite,—perfect as it stands, in its isolation, irrespective of its history, cause, or consequence. But these are very difficult matters, as well as very suggestive. I mention them here in passing merely to indicate that the good which, on our hypothesis, the State must promote, is no limited good. It must “patronize the arts” and foster the love of truth, for their own sakes, as elements of the highest good, and, in their own way, themselves highest.

Understanding the good which is to be advanced by the positive enactments of the State in this way, that it is the good of *all* its citizens and the development of *all* their best faculties; assuming, that the crucial case of military obligations. is, that every citizen has a right to demand such action on the part of the State, what power has the State over his life and liberty? How can it, for instance, call upon him to defend it in war? Surely, it will be urged, it cannot be promoting his moral good when it demands that he shall expose his own life to the risk

of death and attempt to take the lives of others. Nor is the objection met by saying that the citizen 'volunteers,' offering his life freely for the purposes of the State. The State, it would seem, has no right to accept it, and his free offer would only show his agreement with the State in doing what is wrong. Whether the citizen volunteers or is compelled to serve, he ceases in both cases, it would appear, to be an end in himself, and is used as a means of securing a well-being in which he does not share. "War is ever a great wrong; it is a violation on a multitudinous scale of the individual's right to live." "If there is such a thing as a right to live on the part of the individual as such, is there any reason to doubt that this right is violated in the case of every one killed in war?"¹

On the other hand, if the State has not the right to demand that its citizens shall fight for it, what right remains to it which can be worth insisting upon? To deny it that right, in the condition of the world as it has hitherto been, is equivalent to denying the right of the State to continue to exist, and to continue to be an instrument for the promotion of the common good of its citizens. It would seem, then, that the good of the citizen and that of the State are incompatible: either the one or the other must be sacrificed. Which shall it be? On the moral criterion we should have to say 'Neither'; which means that the moral criterion breaks down. War-politics thus falls within the domain not of morality but of expediency. Apparently we gain no guidance from moral principles, for they cannot concede that the violation of any right is justifiable.

What answer can we make to these objections? It is that the moral criterion cannot be rejected as useless

¹ Cf. Green, *Principles of Political Obligation*, p. 468.

unless it fails, and in this case it is not even tested. There are two assumptions implicit in the argument which are inconsistent with the nature of morality. These are, first, that the good of the citizen and that of the State are distinct, separable, independent, respectively the private possession of each : secondly, that the good of each is its own as it stands, and consists in the right merely to exist. But no isolated, particular good can be a moral good, perking itself up against the rest of the moral universe. Taken by itself, out of all relations to the wider realm and apart from all ethical context, nothing is good. Nor can it be wrong. Moral judgment is not possible except by reference to the Absolute Good—which is the only moral good ; and the Absolute Good is all-comprehensive. Goodness and truth are, in this respect, strictly analogous. Principles of morality, like the principles of truth, ‘ apply to,’ as we say, ‘ *live in* ’ we ought to say, and constitute the self-developing essence of the particulars. We prove or disprove a statement by showing that it is, or is not, consistent with other truths ; and extend the ‘ world ’ of reference as the argument proceeds, till it is shown that the statement is, or is not, consistent with the possibility of truth itself—of any truth. And the rightness or wrongness of a practical principle of action is tested in the same way. The wrong act persisted in will break up the moral world, vice passing into vice and the disorder spreading : the whole moral world, nay the very possibility of a moral world, stands up against it. On the other hand, as we have already said, a man at his duty, in his station and fulfilling its demands, knows and feels that he has the moral world at his back, and ultimately the whole scheme of things, natural as well as moral. In a word, except in so far as we judge the particular by reference to the whole, or the principle of the whole—such,

e.g. as justice or love—we do not pass a moral judgment at all and are not applying the moral criterion.

When, therefore, the State declares war and calls upon its citizens to fight, its action must not be judged on the mere assumption that it has a right to exist. It has neither the right, nor, ultimately, the power to exist, in contradiction to its own nature and function, which we are saying is that of promoting, *in* its citizens, a life devoted to what is in itself good—the good. Mere life, even the life of the State, has no final and absolute value : it may be necessary to expunge a State. A State invites that destiny in so far as it persists in wrongdoing. Its right to exist is derivative and contingent : it depends upon its attitude to the moral good. We can say to it what Frederick the Great said to d'Argens : “ *Vous devriez savoir qu'il n'est pas nécessaire que je vive, mais bien que je fasse mon devoir.*”

Our criterion, then, enables us to limit the rights of the State over its citizens, and the rights of the citizens against the State, in war. The State has a right to summon its citizens to a just war and to no other ; and the citizen, on his part, has a right and a duty to obey in the first case and in no other. Our principle condemns wars of aggression, ambition, hatred, and every form of national vanity ; and, as we believe, and rightly believe, condemns Germany in the present war. But it approves of the Allies *in the same war*, in so far as they are fighting for liberty—the liberty that is universal, and universal because it reverences the sovereignty of the personality of every State, great or small, as the condition of its pursuit of the moral good. For *that* good is common, and the pursuit of it makes the States not competitors against, but helpers of, one another.

But who is to judge whether a war is just or unjust ? Is it the State or is it the individual ? I should answer,

‘Both!’ If we are right in maintaining that the State and the individual are both alike moral agents, this consequence follows. No moral agent can delegate *Quis* the function of judging what is right or wrong. *judicabit?* Moral judgment, like the action which follows from it, is the privilege and obligation of every being that wills, at every stage and by reference to every aim and act. Not only may the individual citizen judge whether the war in which he is required by his country to serve is or is not just, it is his duty to do so, and to act in accordance with his judgment. If he is convinced that the war is wrong, it is his duty to refuse to fight. It *may* even be his duty to fight against his country. What cannot be his duty is that of taking no side when the question of the right and wrong is being decided by means of war. The pacifist’s protest against war, when his country is fighting, is the affirmation of a moral principle when it cannot be applied; and it has no more value than the affirmation of a hypothesis which is not applicable to facts. The good man deals with present circumstances and finds his duty at his hand. The good citizen rises ‘from law to law;’ from that of obedience and patience, the old ordinary law of times of peace, to the new. He is

“Promoted at one cry
O’ the trump of God to the new service, not
To longer bear, but henceforth fight, be found
Sublime in new impatience with the foe!
Endure man and obey God: plant firm foot
On neck of man, tread man into the hell
Meet for him, and obey God all the more!”¹

At this point, other questions of the respective limits of the rights of the State and the individual emerge, and promi-

¹ Browning’s *Ring and the Book: The Pope*, l. 1057 ff.

nently the rights and the limits of private judgment and of its utterance, by the spoken and written word, in times of peace and of war ; or, on the other hand, the duty of the State to 'tolerate' or to 'suppress' opinions, and, generally, the so-called rights of 'conscience.' I shall leave the discussion of these matters to the reader, for I lack space. I must be content to state my own opinion without supporting it, but inviting criticism. Wrong opinions have no rights, except the right to be refuted ; and the ignorant or erring conscience has no right except the right to be enlightened. But, as a rule (to say the least), the best method of exercising the right of refutation or enlightenment is that of toleration, and the worst is that of suppression. John Milton, in perhaps the sublimest prose I know, has settled this question in principle in his *Areopagitica*. "Though all the winds of doctrine were let loose to play upon the earth, so truth be in the field, we do injuriously by licensing and prohibiting to misdoubt her strength. Let her and falsehood grapple ; who ever knew truth put to the worse, in a free and open encounter ? Her confuting is the best and surest suppressing. . . . For who knows not that truth is strong, next to the Almighty ; she needs no policies, nor stratagems, nor licensings to make her victorious, these are the shifts and the defences that error uses against her power : give her room, and do not bind her when she sleeps." Let the pacifist stand by his conscience, seeking to know the good ever more fully and to be ever more humbly loyal to its deliverances : and, meanwhile, let him take his chance, and endure the consequences with as little fuss and sense of martyrdom as do they who suffer, and die and take the life of others whom they do not hate, *also* in obedience to *their* conscience.

The appeal in this case also is to the moral good, the

all-comprehensive system of right; and I believe that, keeping it in view, neither the State nor the individual will go irretrievably wrong. There is a remedy in the very *spirit* of loyalty to the best, and it will prove effective soon or late.

I propose to subject our criterion, by reference to which, as I believe, the limitations of the respective rights of the State and the citizen should be determined, to one more test. I wish to apply it to the problem of property. Assuming that the object of the State is the best life of its citizens, the "fullest development of their forces and faculties," how far and in what ways should it 'interfere' with private property, and how far, in view of the same purpose, should it itself own property, dispose of it, or produce it? The problem has many aspects, and any one of them can, and as a matter of fact constantly does, arrogate the attention that is due only to the whole of them, with the result that absorption in it issues in the distortion of the truth and, finally, in contradictions. The true principle must combine, or rather *be* the inner truth of them all, and at the same time give to each of them its own place and the fullest play. What principle the State, ours or any other, follows at present in its dealing with property is not clear: I should find it hard to deny the accusation that its procedure is empirical; that it has no clear principle in its thoughts, and follows no definite and consistent purpose; and that its hesitations and inconsistencies are due to this cause. The questions most often discussed, as between the State and the individual, are—who is to possess or produce wealth, and what share in its possession or production they should respectively have: the *purpose* is left very much in the background. On our view it ought to be dominant and regulative.

The first general truth I should like to make decisively clear, if I could, is that property is meaningless, or is not wealth at all, apart from its purpose, or apart from its possible or actual practical use. We have fallen into the error of regarding material wealth as having intrinsic value, and we tend not uncommonly to devote our energies to gaining possession of it, irrespective, or with the slightest consideration of what is to be done with it. We had better see, we say, whether and how much wealth we have before considering how to spend it: a wealth of day-dreams is apt to be unsubstantial and disappointing. All the same, wealth is not wealth, but only its unrealized possibility, apart from the spending of it; and the spending of it means its application to the satisfaction of desire and the transmutation of it in the process of that application. To own or to produce what is of no actual or possible use is to own nothing, or to own what is more inconvenient than nothing.

The
meaning of
wealth.

Obvious as these facts are, their significance is imperfectly realized. The modern economist will now admit—at last—that his science is abstract; just as the modern psychologist will admit that the faculties of the human mind are not separate powers, with an empty ‘ego’ in the background. But both are apt, even yet, to confess their error and then to continue to commit it: not realizing, at least fully, that abstract truths are the worst errors. The economist defines, but is only partially loyal to the definition of his science, as one of “*the Sciences of Man*”—“the science of man as the producer, distributor, and consumer of wealth.” The conception of the human value of wealth does not *rule* either his thoughts or our practice in dealing with it. It is not from this point of view, *e.g.* that the problems of the rights of Capital and Labour, or

of Profit and Wages, Free Trade or Protection, or the respective rights and limits of production by the State and the individual are considered, as yet. Profits and losses are reckoned in terms of the raw material of wealth, and measured in money. It is not realized that the truth gained from this point of view is as much short of and different from the truth about wealth, which we are seeking, as the merely physical theory of sound is from the theory of the musician's experience. By itself, material wealth is as barren a possession as a musical instrument that is never played, and which will lend itself as readily to the production of torturing discords as to the noblest harmonies. I do not think I am unjust to the modern world in saying that its mind is more given to the production of the instrument than to the art of using it. And the artist is the moral character. Increase his personal power, and he will elicit from very humble instruments, the peace and happiness and social uses of a virtuous life. It is man's good, or rather his goodness, that endows wealth with all its value. Ethical considerations should not enter into 'economics' as a preliminary apology, first made and then forgotten, nor as a correcting after-thought: they should be dominant throughout. And we, plain men, must learn to wait before calling a man rich or poor, till we know to what uses he is putting his possessions, whether they be broad or narrow. Speaking of the splendour of the spirit shown by our soldiers in the war, in contrast with the spirit that is "grasping, inconsiderate, irritable and meddlesome," Mr Bradley says, "Imagine for a moment that, when peace returns to England, we could retain undiminished that sense of unity and that self-devotion which have been evoked by war, and could use them wisely in all their strength, if only for ten years,

to make England, morally and socially, all that it might be. Why, it might become, for itself, almost what Shakespeare called it, 'a second Eden,' and, for others, a light to lighten the nations."¹

I do not say that the economic world is "grasping and inconsiderate," but I dare not deny it. I cannot find that the soldiers at the front are rolling the perils of death on their comrades, as the economic world with a most peaceful conscience, rolls the costs and losses from dealer to dealer, till they rest on the shoulders of the consumer, who can roll them no further. Next in order of magnitude to the perils which war threatens to the State are those which issue from the conflict for power and pelf between the employer and the employee, and which all the seriousness of the war suffices, just suffices, not to meet and overcome, but to postpone. We are trying to foresee and provide against these perils, realizing, all alike, the need of what we call Economic Reconstruction. This is well. But the economic reconstruction that will prove adequate is not that which stops short at methods of dealing with the production and distribution of wealth, leaving as they are at present the ethical relations which enter into the making and use of wealth. These ethical forces, always operative and always distilling the values of the industries for all engaged in them, must be lifted from the background of the nation's mind. They must become objects of the primary care of the State, and their development must become its primary purpose. Wealth is a social product, and where society has developed into a State, the State is responsible for it. It is responsible for it,—for its production, distribution, security, and use—even as it is responsible for the life and liberty of its citizens.

¹ *The International Crisis*, p. 56.

I am not forgetting that wealth is not wealth unless it belongs to some one. Property is always personal, and is rightly called private. Its value is in its use, and, in the last resort, it is individuals who enjoy the use, even if its dainties are spread on a common table. Property is something owned by a will, and every will, as we have seen, has its inalienable subjective and self-referent aspect. Even so-called common property, so far from being something which no one in particular owns, is owned, and owned for certain private purposes, by many wills. Communism does not imply the destruction of property as private, nor the abolition of private right. If all property were as common as the public roads, such uses as it retained would remain private. They would be limited, no doubt, either by general collision or by agreement, in accordance with the ethical condition of the 'private' wills and the reality of their interest in a common good. In insisting on the social conditions of wealth, I do not in the least deny its privacy.

But the privacy of property is only one of its aspects. Mere appropriation does not constitute property; or, in other words, the possession of an object by force does not suffice. What the robber steals and holds by force is not his property. It is not enough that an individual says '*Mine*,' he must be able to say '*mine by right*.' Before property arises, some power not himself must assent to his appropriation and say '*Thine*.' Property is a social institution, and if the society is a State the possession of property must be ratified by the will of the State. First occupancy may be assigned as a ground for claiming a right to an object. But it is at best only a preliminary step; the right does not arise until it is affirmed by the social will. The most clamant assertor of the privacy

of his property and of the right to use or abuse it as he pleases, admits this truth ; for he will demand protection by the will and force of his community. And his demand is justified. Property is a social interest as well as a social institution. The State's own good is involved in it not less deeply than the individual citizen's. It is the product of motives directed towards a common good, and however little we may be conscious of its operation, it is instituted and maintained by the common will. There are no ethical relations which do not issue from some conception, however obscure, of a common good, and where there are no ethical relations there can be no property. Its nature is not intelligible in any other light.

It follows that the functions of society in relation to property, or to material wealth, are analogous to its functions with regard to life and liberty ; and that they are limited, both for the State and the citizen, in an analogous way. But, it will be said, the rights of life and liberty belong to every man. Nothing, except the use of them to his own fundamental injury and that of the State, can justify their restriction. They are universal and inviolable. Are the rights of property universal and inviolable ? If so, what is to be said of ' the property-less class ' ?

In the first place, to accord the right to a free life and to refuse the means of exercising it is to nullify the grant. Man can live only in relation to an external environment ; and his freedom is not freedom from it, but a power, greater or smaller, over it ; and his power over it is the possession of its uses to satisfy his wants. A person who owns nothing, can do nothing and be nothing. Life without the means of living, personal gifts or skill that have no outlet, liberty that is only an inner consciousness and has no sphere of exercise, are all alike meaningless.

In the second place, the right of property is not only universal but sacred : sacred on the same ground as the right to life and liberty. Property implies the extension of the individuality or personality over the object owned. ' Mine ' implies ' me.' To restrict or violate the rights of a man as owner is to restrict or violate his personality. Both society and the individual are interested in its security. Its security is a common good. " Just as the recognized interest of a society constitutes for each member of it the right to free life, just as it makes each conceive of such life on the part of himself and his neighbours as what should be, and thus forms the basis of a restraining custom which secures it for each, so it constitutes the right to the instruments of such life, making each regard the possession of them by the other as for the common good, and thus through the medium first of custom, then of law, securing them to each." ¹

In the third place, the concession by society of a right to property is an empty concession unless it carries with it the means of exercising that right. It is easy to bid every man acquire property and to promise to protect him in the possession of it, but he cannot acquire it except in some station. It comes by gift or inheritance only to the few. A skilled worker who can get no work cannot acquire it. Green goes further. " A man," he says, " who possesses nothing but his powers of labour and who has to sell these to a capitalist for bare daily maintenance, might as well, in respect of the ethical purposes which the possession of property should serve, be denied rights of property altogether." ² The contract he makes with his employer is not a free contract, and therefore not a contract at all :

¹ Green's *Principles of Political Obligation*, § 216, p. 523.

² *Ibid.* § 220, p. 525.

he yields to necessity and barter his life for a livelihood. The State whose social arrangements necessitate or maintain or permit such conditions is not a society of free men ; nor is it loyal to the good either of itself or of its citizens.

Lastly, the possession of the right of property, or of the right to work which produces property, is contingent on the use made of it, only in the same way as the right to life and liberty. It belongs to man till he misuses it, that is to say, till he makes such uses of it as are inconsistent with the right and well-being of his neighbours, and inimical to the common good. Green sums up the truth as follows : " The rationale of property, in short, requires that every one who will conform to the positive condition of possessing it, viz., labour, and the negative condition, viz., respect for it as possessed by others, should, so far as social arrangements can make him so, be a possessor of property himself, and of such property as will enable him to develop a sense of responsibility, as distinct from mere property in the immediate necessities of life."¹ Social arrangements cannot *make* him an owner, unless he plays his own part ; but the State is bound to provide him not with an empty right to become an owner of property, but also with the opportunity. The use of the opportunity is a responsibility that rests upon him, and he cannot divest himself of it and retain his rights.

For these reasons, I do not think it possible to avoid the conclusion that the right to gain and hold property is as fundamental as the right to life and liberty. It is, in truth, a condition without which the latter can have no real value. And, so far as I can see, the right to property carries with it the right to work. This latter has been, in a manner, conceded in the past,

¹ *Ibid.* § 221, p. 526.

as the word 'work-house' implies. The State, in the worst extremity, stepped between the worker and starvation, while taking every care that the work should neither be useful nor honourable, lest the State might encroach on the province of private enterprise and compete against the individual employer. Its act was an act of mercy—much qualified, and by no means considered as the fulfilment of an obligation to its citizens. The duty of the State to provide work as the means of realizing liberty and maintaining life is even yet much canvassed and often doubted; and it still ranks far below the obligations which we call primary. On the other hand, the right of the State that corresponds to this duty is also inadequately recognized: its right, that is to say, to secure the fulfilment of the conditions for which the worker himself is responsible, namely, that the work shall be done and done well. If the State is bound to provide the opportunity, the worker is bound to provide the will to work and the necessary skill. Such rights as the old or the infirm who cannot work may have, stand on another basis; and do not touch the fact that he who demands work must be able and willing to do it.

On both sides, it seems to me that the social mind has a considerable way to travel before it recognizes clearly the fulness, and the fundamental character, of the obligations connected with material property. The shadows of a bad national tradition pass away very slowly. And were I to try to trace the error on which the bad tradition rested, I should look for it in two directions: in the negative view of the relation between the State and its citizens, and in that which in the end may come to the same thing, namely, the inadequate recognition of the ethical forces which are operative in the constitution and the maintenance

of even the economic organization. The former cause led to attempts to delimit the respective provinces of the activities of the State and the individual : it was not realized that the economic organization involved their co-operation and that the social and individual aspects are inseparable. It was a common good that was sought, and only a united will could secure it. But the sense of mutual responsibility, in regard to property, was low and limited.

That sense, however, is growing fast, at least on one side. The sense of the responsibility of the community (that is, ultimately of the State in its more technical sense) for providing all its members with the opportunity for an effective free life—for a

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life which has access to the use of its material environment, is deepening every day. The nation's mind is passing gradually through a change which is nothing less than revolutionary. In the time of Adam Smith, and long afterwards, it was assumed that State-regulation was essentially hurtful. The economic organization was regarded as a separate organization from the political, an affair not of the State but of individuals. It had a regulative principle of its own. It was that of competition. "A belief in its beneficent effects was the mainspring of the movement to 'free' industry and commerce from all State-*'interference,'* and is the ground of most opposition to State-regulation to-day."¹ But the expansion of the economic resources of the nation has exposed the falsity of this negative attitude. The costly and severe school of experience has shown that "the abandonment of sanitary conditions, hours of work, speed of work, exposure to risk of accident from machinery and the age of the workers to the regulation of competition, made hells of mines and factories,

¹ *Economics*, by Henry Clay, p. 380.

and compelled the State to interfere in defiance of any economic principles. . . . Hence arose Factory Legislation. Conditions of employment are now regulated by the State in innumerable ways.”¹ Motives of pity and charity have shed their sentimental character, and generosity, with its tang of supererogatory virtue, or of being something more than duty could require, has been strengthened into a categorical obligation. Cries for mercy on the part of the sufferers have become claims for justice, and the claims have, by the action of the State, been converted into rights. Nor can I admit that this change was “in defiance of economic principles.” It is due to the better comprehension of economic principles, to the dawning consciousness that these themselves have ethical significance. And who will say that there is economic loss, even if we do persist in reckoning it in the most material sense of the term?

This new attitude of the public mind—the growing conviction that the function of the State is not merely negative and regulative but positive and creative, and that its manipulation of the external conditions of life must have direct and deliberate reference to the moral good of its citizens—will have consequences in the province of the *production* of wealth, not less far-reaching than in the protection and regulation of its use. It means nothing less than that the State and its citizens are on the way to a clear consciousness that they are partners in the industrial enterprise. Nay, the conception of ‘partnership’ is inadequate to the intimacy of the relationship. Not only are there contributions from both sides to every item both of the material and of the moral product, proving that both the individual and the State have been active, but there must be *one* will, devoted to *one* good. The way to this

¹ *Economics*, by Henry Clay, p. 385.

consummate national good is long : I am not sure but that it is an endless way. But its borders are flower-strewn, it opens fairer prospects at every turn, and every step forward upon it is itself a gain. It partakes of the character of every moral enterprise, in that its rewards are not postponed. The moving tent which the travellers nightly pitch on this journey, not only brings them 'a day's march nearer home' : they are *at home*, within their own most rich estate all the way, so long as they are 'in their duty.'

It cannot be doubted that on one side, that of the State and the 'public' conscience, our country has entered upon this way. Already the care of the State for the well-being of those engaged in production is manifested in many ways. So far as the *regulation* of employment is concerned the ways are 'innumerable.' "The contract of employment has become 'a conditioned' contract—a contract, that is to say, which the State will not recognize and enforce, unless it complies with certain conditions laid down in statutes—as to sanitation, ventilation, fencing of machinery, hours of work, age of the workers, and in some cases medical inspection and even wages."¹ Individual employers, in surely growing numbers, go further. They have introduced what they call 'welfare work' : "Giving workers every facility—sometimes compelling them—to take continuation and technical classes, both during the working day and after hours"; "assuring them, practically, continuity of employment so long as they do their work, suspending rather than dismissing, and dismissing only after the most serious consideration"; "giving pensions at a comparatively early age after so many years' service"; "introducing a shorter hours' week and a longer night's rest, arranging

¹ *Ibid.* p. 385.

for holidays, almost eliminating short-time and overtime by organization of stock-keeping ; inviting and rewarding suggestions for technical or personal improvements ; supplying whole-time works' doctors and works' dentists, surgeries, and ambulance stations ; employing professional social workers ; compelling physical training and physical exercise, encouraging clubs, providing dining-halls with meals at cost, libraries, baths of all kinds, recreation grounds, gymnasiums, gardens, even allotments, houses at cheap rents, convalescent homes, etc., etc.—carrying out, when circumstances allow, the idea of ' the factory in the garden,' and making the surroundings in which they spend fifty hours in the week as pleasant, healthful, and stimulating as they can be." ¹

A great social and moral ideal in operation, and in successful operation, as that of these employers undeniably is (even from the point of economic success), *is a contagion in a community*. It will assuredly spread. And like other adventures which at first are voluntary and philanthropic, and a more or less ' tender plant,' it will become more robust. It will acquire the character of a social necessity, and the State will ratify what it involves, as a right, and secure it by its statutes.

Looking to the future I am not concerned so much about what will be done *for* the worker as I am about what will be done *by* the worker. Not that I think less of him than of the employer, or care less. He is blood of my blood and bone of my bone, and my long intercourse with the best of him tilts my feelings the other way and disturbs, against my will, the

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future.

¹ See on this whole question of the privileges, that is, of the moral obligations of the employer, Professor Smart's *Second Thoughts of an Economist*.

balance of my judgment. My fears for him are greater from quite other causes. The education of the employer in the moral responsibilities of his function is moving apace at a rate which, relative to such profound changes of social attitude, is not slow. I do not deny that in many cases the relation between him and his workers is crude even to barbarism, and possibly more than one generation of both employers and workmen must pass away before the methods of morality prevail. But the tendency of the times, accelerated—how much, who will venture to say—by the war, is all in one direction. And if the employer cannot be educated he will be compelled ; for the power of the State is passing into the hands of the employee. Moreover, the employee is, I believe, destined to be more than a mere employee : he is about to share the privileges, such as they are, the anxieties, the hopes, and the responsibilities of employing himself and his fellows.

And “ why not ? ” I shall be promptly asked. And I answer, ‘ why not ? ’—provided that he is fitted for the task. If, again, it be replied that he cannot be much less fit in the ages to come than the employer has been in the times that are passing, I should most fully agree. But I would point out that he must be much *more* fit, both for the management of industry and for directing his country’s destiny. For there can be no appeal against his authority, and no correcting of his blunder except through tragedy. The road to ruin for an ignorant and selfish democracy is far shorter than for any other kind of mis-government ; the fall is greater, and the ruin is more complete. There is no builder of the common good who builds so nobly and securely as a wise democracy ; and there are no hands which destroy so hopelessly as the hands of the many.

Contemplating the future, I am as one who stands on

the shore of a vast ocean, all in storm, witnessing a great argosy setting forth on a voyage of adventure and discovery to a land all unknown, except for the wealth of its treasures. Its captain has only dim prognostications of the direction in which he should sail, for the unknown land may be anywhere ; his authority over his crew is insecure, for the spirit of captaincy is in them all ; and the crew is very numerous. But I would not stop the venture even under these conditions ; for it is a venture for liberty and a fuller and more human life. But I would educate both the captain and the crew, if I only could ; or, rather, I would fain witness them educate themselves.

And I would educate them, above all, into a fuller sense of the magnitude of their responsibility and the splendour of their chance : an education which, in the last resort, means hardly more than one thing to me, it is so comprehensive—their education in the obligations, the responsibilities, and the privileges of good citizenship. In one word, I would deepen their care for the common good.

The most substantial objects throw the blackest shadows : the best things when perverted become the worst evils. The battle of the worker for effective freedom, that is, for room and opportunity to live a full human life, cannot but carry with it the sympathy and good wishes of the wise. The instruments which he has invented to secure his ends, and to make one will of many wills, such as the Trade Unions, are instruments which he has the right to hold and to wield. But he is bound to wield them wisely. If I am asked if he will do so, I can only answer that I do not know. I can be sure only of two things—the one negative, the other positive. He must beware of confining his interest to his class, and of interpreting these interests merely, or even primarily, in terms of the material conditions of well-

being. And, secondly, when he stands to his duties as a citizen and deals with the affairs of the State, he must forget the very notion of a class and, dealing with the rights of man as man, aim always at a good that is more universal than any class, the good of man as man. Then he can be trusted both with his own fate and with that of his country. He can be trusted while he is still on the way to this goal, in so far as this ideal guides his footsteps.

There are considerations which moderate my anxiety when I look forward to the workers' part in the management of the industries and in ruling the State.

I can but mention them in passing. Whether for the purposes of 'party' politics or not, the meaning of 'Labour' is being extended. The 'brain-worker' is invited to take his place at the side of the worker with his hands: and there are very few persons who do not come under the one category or the other. The State will not suffer injury from added respect for the worker with his mind, or from a lowered respect for such as prey upon society without the will to bear any of its burdens. This wider conception has the virtue in it which will eliminate the noxious and nauseous associations which cling to the word 'class'; and it will obviate the corruption of the working man's soul and social motive which the narrower meaning inevitably brings.

As to the growth of the sense of collective responsibility for industrial conditions, did space allow I should try to show that it does not necessarily mean an increase of 'State Socialism.' It does mean a greater degree of public control both as regards production and distribution. But the control, though ultimately a concern of the State and subject always to its direction, may be exercised by the industrial organization itself. To throw the responsibility

The responsibility of labour.

on industry, as we throw the responsibility of religious education upon the churches, may be the most potent means of its moralization.

If I were asked what is the best way of securing that industry shall deserve this trust, or, more generally, that democracy, the worker, shall deserve to be entrusted with the supreme care of his country's good? I would answer: "Give him as soon as possible the responsibility." The obstacles and hindrances on the way to that event will be ample. We are not a precipitate people, nor inconsiderate. We do not draw hasty conclusions from narrow premises, as abstract logicians are apt to do. Like good logicians, we are, on the whole, careful above all else that our *premises* are stated fully and allowed to operate, knowing that the conclusions will then come of themselves. Moreover, the instances which the history of mankind furnishes of generous conceptions introduced too soon, and too good to be practical, are very few: but the dangers of delay are written on every page. One thing alone is of paramount importance. It is that, *pari passu* with the granting of the trust to the worker, let him learn the magnitude of his responsibilities; teach him the nature of the State, how it is in every fibre a *moral* structure; reveal to him the wealth of his inheritance as a citizen of his country and let him feel its weight: *instruct him* in the elements of citizenship.

Above all, let the consciousness of the common good be instant, not only in the background of his mind, but before it as an end always to be sought and never to be sacrificed. The further articulation of that good will come with the love and the practice of it. Seeing and following this light, he will not be led away from his duty on an idle and impossible quest; and he is too dark a prophet who says of the workers as rulers—

“ That most of them would follow wandering fires,
Lost in the quagmire.”

On the contrary, he will sit the closer to his duty, find it in his station, however humble, and discover that his service there is the service of the best he knows. He will learn that, like King Arthur, he

“ Must guard
That which he rules, and is but as the hind
To whom a space of land is given to plough,
Who may not wander from the allotted field
Before his work be done ; but, being done,
Let visions of the night or of the day
Come, as they will ; and many a time they come,
Until this earth he walks on seems not earth,
This light that strikes his eyeball is not light,
This air that smites his forehead is not air
But vision—yea, his very hand and foot—
In moments when he feels he cannot die,
And knows himself no vision to himself,
Nor the high God a vision, nor that One
Who rose again.” ¹

¹Tennyson's *Idylls of the King: The Holy Grail*.

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